THUNDERBIRDS

ANNUAL

1971

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To Paul
Love
Mum + Dad
Xmas 1970

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GERRY ANDERSON'S

THUNDERBIRDS

and the

MENACE OF THE WARLORD

NO ONE KNEW THE REAL IDENTITY OF THE OWNER OF THE FORTRESS-LIKE ISLAND THAT NESTLED IN THE BLUE SOUTH ATLANTIC. EVEN THOSE WHO SERVED HIM KNEW HIM ONLY AS **THE GENERAL**...

EVERYTHING IS READY, GENERAL!

EXCELLENT! FOR YEARS I HAVE PLOTTED AND PREPARED FOR A CHANCE SUCH AS THIS!

BUT THE GENERAL LIKED TO THINK OF HIMSELF AS **THE WARLORD**! FOR THAT WAS BEHIND HIS PLAN FOR POWER— **WAR!**

TODAY, WE SHALL CAUSE THE ADJOINING REPUBLICS OF *BALODIA* AND *DALGADAS* TO DECLARE WAR. I SHALL SUPPLY THE ARMS WITH WHICH THEY WILL WEAKEN EACH OTHER...

WHEN BOTH ARMIES HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO RABBLES, **WE** SHALL INVADE—AND I SHALL RULE BOTH REPUBLICS!

SEE HOW THEY HAVE PLAYED INTO MY HANDS. BALODIA DESIGNS A NEW MISSILE-SHIP. DALGADAS, A NEW AIRLINER. **WE** SHALL CONTROL THEM BOTH, EH, PROFESSOR?

YES, GENERAL! OUR AGENTS HAVE PLANTED *REMOTE-CONTROL RECEIVERS* ON BOTH SHIP AND PLANE. EVERYTHING IS READY!

ABOARD HIS SWIFTLY-MOVING NAVY VESSEL, THE PRESIDENT OF BALODIA HAD NO INKLING OF IMPENDING WAR...

IN TWO HOURS WE SHALL BE WITHIN RANGE OF THE TARGET ISLAND, SENOR PRESIDENT. OUR MISSILE-GUNS WILL DESTROY IT— FROM TWO HUNDRED MILES AWAY!

EXCELLENT! TODAY WORLD INTEREST WILL FOCUS ON US — NOT ON PRESIDENT MANU'S WRETCHED NEW AIRLINER!

NOR DID THE PRESIDENT OF DALGADAS REALIZE HE, ALSO, WAS A PAWN IN THE GENERAL'S WAR GAME...

SENOR HACKENBACKER IS TO ACCOMPANY ME ON THIS FIRST OFFICIAL FLIGHT. A SCIENTIST OF HIS WORLD STATURE WILL ADD EXTRA DIGNITY TO THIS PROUD OCCASION...

OUR HELICOPTER SHOULD BE ARRIVING AT TRACY ISLAND THIS VERY MOMENT, PRESIDENT MANU!

TRACY ISLAND — THE HOME OF JEFF TRACY AND HIS FIVE SONS AND, UNKNOWN TO THE WORLD, THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF **INTERNATIONAL RESCUE.**

WEEEEEOOOOOOEEEEOOO!

FOR PETE'S SAKE, BRAINS — SWITCH THAT DARNED THING OFF!

'BRAINS' HACKENBACKER HAD FORGOTTEN ABOUT HIS APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT MANU...

YOU'VE BEEN TORTURING US WITH THAT SCREECHING ALL DAY, BRAINS?

WOOOOOOEEEEEOOOEE

I...I'M SORRY, MR. TRACY! BUT THIS INVENTION *COULD* BE VERY IMPORTANT! THAT IS — IF I COULD ONLY MAKE IT WORK PROPERLY!

YOU SEE... ER... SOUND IS A POWER FORCE. IT COULD EVEN BE USED AS AN EXPLOSIVE FOR DEMOLITION WORK! BUT, AS YET, I CAN'T SEEM TO *CONCENTRATE THIS FORCE ENOUGH TO...*

BRAINS! YOU'VE A DATE WITH THE PRESIDENT OF DALGADAS. THE 'COPTER'S COMING FOR YOU RIGHT NOW...

BUT BRAINS' MIND WAS STILL HALF ON HIS EXPERIMENT...

I...I'M GOING! YOU KNOW I'VE CONQUERED THE PROBLEM OF *DISTANCE*! NOW IT'S JUST A QUESTION OF PINPOINTING CONCENTRATION!

FORGET IT FOR A WHILE, BRAINS! JUST GO AND ENJOY YOUR V.I.P. TRIP!

AT LAST, WITH BRAINS AND PRESIDENT MANU ABOARD, THE NEW AIRLINER TOOK OFF...

AH, OUR BEAUTIFUL AIRCRAFT HAS IMPRESSED SENOR HACKENBACKER! HE IS DEEP IN THOUGHT OVER IT!

PERHAPS THE LACK OF SONIC FORCE CONCENTRATION IS DUE TO A FAULT IN THE *RECEIVER* UNIT—NOT THE TRANSMITTER!

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, BRAINS WAS STILL DEEP IN THOUGHT, WHEN SUDDENLY...

PRESIDENT! SOMETHING IS TERRIBLY WRONG! EVERYTHING HAS JAMMED—EVEN THE RADIO! THE AIRCRAFT IS *CONTROLLING ITSELF!*

HECK! I WISH I HADN'T LEFT THE RECEIVER UNIT BACK ON TRACY ISLAND!

THE WORK OF THE EVIL WARLORD HAD BEGUN...

THE CONTROLS—THEY'RE OPERATING! BUT NOW THE ENGINES HAVE CUT. WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO TRY AND *LAND* ON ROCK ISLAND!

WE'RE DOWN!

THE RADIO'S STILL JAMMED! I'VE BEEN UNABLE TO PUT OUT AN S.O.S. NO ONE WILL EVEN KNOW WE'RE HERE!

ROCK ISLAND! THE TARGET BALODIA IS USING TO TEST ITS NEW MISSILE-SHIP!

AS THEY SCRAMBLED FROM THE WRECKED AIRLINER...

OH, MY GOSH! THIS VOLCANO HAS BEEN INACTIVE FOR YEARS. THE IMPACT OF OUR CRASH-LANDING HAS TRIGGERED IT OFF AGAIN!

LOOK! THAT CAVE! *RUN FOR IT!*

BUT MOMENTS LATER...

THE ROCKS HAVE SEALED THE ENTRANCE! WE'VE BEEN *BURIED ALIVE!*

TRAPPED! IF THE VOLCANO DOES NOT DESTROY US, THE BALODIAN MISSILE-GUNS WILL. IF ONLY WE HAD A RADIO WE COULD TELL THEM ABOUT US — AND CONTACT *INTERNATIONAL RESCUE!*

...BUT WE HAVE MY SOUND TRANSMITTER. *AND THE RECEIVER IS ON TRACY ISLAND!*

BACK ON TRACY ISLAND...

WEEEOOOEEEE!

WEEEOOOEEEEEOOOO!

MY **EARS**! THAT'S BRAINS' *SCREECHER!* IT'S STARTED UP BY ITSELF!

WHEN THE SONIC MESSAGE STOPPED...

WEEEEOODDEE!

I'LL STOP THE DARNED THING!

NO! LISTEN ALL OF YOU! IT'S TRANSMITTING *MORSE CODE!* IT MUST BE A MESSAGE FROM BRAINS!

THEY'VE CRASHED ON ROCK ISLAND—THE BALODIAN TARGET ISLAND! I'LL CONTACT THAT BALODIAN SHIP AND STOP THEM FIRING...

FATHER! JOHN'S CALLING IN FROM THUNDERBIRD FIVE!

THUNDERBIRD FIVE WAS INTERNATIONAL RESCUE'S SPACE MONITOR...

FATHER! I HAD A RADIO CALL FROM THE BALODIAN MISSILE-SHIP! THE CONTROLS HAVE JAMMED. THE SHIP IS STEERING *ITSELF!* THEN THEIR RADIO CUT OUT...

THE SAME THING THAT HAPPENED TO THE DALGADASIAN AIRLINER. NOW WE *CAN'T* TELL THEM TO HOLD THEIR FIRE!

SCOTT, TAKE THUNDERBIRD ONE TO ROCK ISLAND. SEE IF THERE'S *ANYTHING* YOU CAN DO! VIRGIL, PUT GORDON AND THUNDERBIRD FOUR DOWN NEAR THE MISSILE-SHIP—*AND HURRY!*

F.A.B., FATHER! BUT WHAT—WHO IS *BEHIND* ALL THIS?

THE WARLORD'S PLAN WAS WORKING PERFECTLY...

THE BALODIAN MISSILE-GUNS ARE JAMMED ON *TIME*-FIRING MECHANISM. ROCK ISLAND IS DOOMED—AND SO IS PRESIDENT MANU OF DALGADAS. HOW MUCH LONGER, PROFESSOR?

AS SOON AS THE SHIP ENTERS ITS FIRING RANGE FROM ROCK ISLAND, GENERAL. ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES!

FIFTEEN MINUTES TO GO, AND THUNDERBIRD ONE ROARED OVER ROCK ISLAND, CARRYING BRAINS' RECEIVER...

THEN BALODIA WILL ASSASSINATE THE PRESIDENT OF ITS RIVAL REPUBLIC! *WHO* WILL BELIEVE THAT THEY COULD NOT *HELP* DOING SO? *DALGADAS AND BALODIA WILL BE AT WAR!*

TB1

I'VE PICKED UP ANOTHER MESSAGE FROM BRAINS! THEY'RE *INSIDE* THE ISLAND! BUT I CAN SEE *TONS OF LAVA* ABOUT TO BOIL UP OUT OF THE CRATER! THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO STOP IT!

TRYING TO HOLD DOWN THE LAVA WITH MY LANDING JETS—BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER I CAN KEEP IT UP!

THUNDERBIRD FOUR SPLASHED DOWN NEAR THE SPEEDING MISSILE-SHIP...

THUNDERBIRD 2

UNDERSTOOD, SCOTT! I'LL RELAY NEW ORDERS TO VIRGIL!

RETURNING TO TRACY ISLAND FOR RELOADING POD, FATHER!

THE CAPTAIN AND THE PRESIDENT ARE STILL ABOARD. THEY'RE TRYING TO FREE THE TIME-FIRING MECHANISM. BUT IT IS HOPELESS!

SWIFTLY, GORDON TRACY DECIDED UPON A PLAN...

ALL I CAN DO, FATHER, IS TRY AND MAKE SURE THE MISSILES ***FALL SHORT*** OF ROCK ISLAND! KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED!

THUNDERBIRD 4

4

THEN...

IT'S *WORKING*, FATHER! I'M TUGGING THE MISSILE-SHIP BACK AWAY FROM THE TWO-HUNDRED-MILE RANGE! BUT WHAT'S HAPPENING TO BRAINS AND THE OTHERS ON ROCK ISLAND?

IR

FIRING *MAGNETIC CLAMPS* TO BOTTOM OF MISSILE-SHIP—NOW FOR THE DODGY PART...

DEAD ON TRACK, VIRGIL!

SOON, THE SECOND POD WAS LOWERED—AND ***THE MOLE*** GOT UNDER WAY...

HURRY IT UP, VIRGIL. THE LAVA'S BUILDING UP. IT'S ABOUT TO SPILL OVER THE TOP!

WITH VAST RELIEF, SCOTT SPOTTED THUNDERBIRD TWO APPROACHING...

TB1

2

YOU'VE GOT BRAINS' SONIC RECEIVER UNIT, SCOTT. GUIDE ME TO *EXACTLY* WHERE THEY ARE!

TWO MINUTES SHOULD DO IT, SCOTT. KEEP BLASTING AT THAT LAVA!

CRIES OF RELIEF GREETED THE APPEARANCE OF THE FANTASTIC DRILLING MACHINE...

...INTERNATIONAL RESCUE! I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU KNEW WE WERE HERE, BUT YOU HAVE SAVED US ALL!

NOT YET – HURRY ABOARD! THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME LEFT!

THE INSTANT THUNDERBIRD TWO WAS ONCE AGAIN AIRBORNE...

THERE SHE GOES! THAT WAS *CLOSE*!

THE JOB'S NOT OVER YET, SCOTT! NOW WE MUST MAKE FOR THE MISSILE-SHIP!

TB1

2

AS THEY NEARED THE SHIP...

VIRGIL, I'VE TOWED HER OUT OF RANGE. BUT THE CREW TOLD ME THE GUNS ARE LOCKED TO TIME-FIRE IN **THIRTY SECONDS**! THE MISSILES COULD HIT ANOTHER *POPULATED* ISLAND!

4

4

LOOK AT OUR DETECTOR SCREEN! YOU CAN SEE THE RADIO BEAM THAT'S REMOTE-CONTROLLING THE MISSILE-SHIP!

WE CAN'T STOP THOSE GUNS FIRING, VIRGIL. AND THE CAPTAIN AND PRESIDENT ARE STILL ON BOARD! SO WE'LL HAVE TO SEND THOSE MISSILES ***BACK*** ALONG THEIR RADIO BEAM – ON WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS. ***THERE'S NO CHOICE!***

TEN SECONDS TO GO...

RELEASED MAGNETIC CLAMPS! OVER TO YOU, VIRGIL!

PUSH A BIT MORE, VIRGIL. THE GUNS ARE ALMOST *POINTING BACK ALONG* THE RADIO BEAM – **NOW**...

4

4

2

2

BACK ON THE WARLORD'S ISLAND H.Q. ...

THREE... TWO... ONE... BLAST OFF!

IT'S DONE! IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD, BALODIA HAS OPENED FIRE ON THE PRESIDENT OF DALGADAS!

IN JUST A FEW MOMENTS, ROCK ISLAND WILL BE DESTROYED – AND SO WILL *PEACE!*

THE MISSILES ARE COMING ***THIS*** WAY – TRAVELLING ALONG *OUR OWN BEAM!*

THEY'RE ALMOST *HERE!* ***WE CAN'T STOP THEM NOW!***

THEY FIRED AT **US!** WHAT WENT WRONG?

THEN...

BAAAAWK

WHO DID THIS TO – **AAAAHHHH!**

THE FOLLOWING DAY...

NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW WHO WAS BEHIND THAT — BUT THANKS TO YOU BOYS – BALODIA AND DALGADAS HAVE DECIDED IT MIGHT BE *SAFER* TO BE *FRIENDS*, RATHER THAN ENEMIES!

IT'S THANKS TO BRAINS REALLY, FATHER. BY THE WAY, WHERE **IS** BRAINS?

AS IF IN ANSWER...

WEEEEOOOOEEE!

MIGHT HAVE KNOWN IT! HE'S STILL WORKING ON THAT INFERNAL *EAR-BLASTER* OF HIS! I'LL STOP HIM!

NO, SCOTT! LET HIM BE!

DARN IT! JUST CAN'T SEEM TO *CONCENTRATE* THESE SOUND WAVES ENOUGH. HAVE TO TAKE IT TO PIECES AGAIN!

DON'T DISTURB HIM. BECAUSE *WHATEVER* BRAINS INVENTS ALWAYS COMES IN USEFUL – AT *SOME* TIME OR OTHER!

WEEEEOOOOEEE!

JOE 90 THE THIN RED WIRE

The passport official glanced at the familiar green cover of the United States passport. He wondered briefly how many thousands of similar documents he had handled in the past twelve years.

Thousands of faces—thousands of photographs; but, somehow, this one was different!

He looked hard into the gaunt face of the man that stood beyond the counter. Yes, there was no doubt about it—only that morning each airport official had been briefed to watch out for Frank Lazane.

It was never explained to them what Lazane had done or why the police wanted him. But they had been told to keep a special watch—and the passport official had done his job.

A stealthy nod to a colleague, the menacing words, "Will you come with me, please, sir," and the uniformed man had quick and able-bodied help.

Frank Lazane felt a moment of panic. Should he run? Where to? Should he fight? One man might be a fair match, perhaps two—but not the four thick-set officials who were closing in around him.

A cold, clammy fear replaced the panic and Lazane's mind started to think more clearly. He found that fear was his best friend; it helped him to keep alert and to think rationally.

What could they prove? They were arresting him because of his reputation. He knew the police needed more than just a bad record and suspicion upon which to base a case. He would give them a run for their money. They would get nothing out of him.

The early morning sun glinted off the silver ocean as Professor Ian McClaine glanced with tired eyes out of the window of the sleek limousine.

Beside Mac was Sam Loover, deputy head of the World Intelligence Network's London Office.

They had been up all night and the dawn sky seemed more peaceful than usual above the Dorset coast. In another five minutes they would be at Mac's picturesque cottage and then the real work would begin.

Mac's son, Joe, was waiting for them, ready for action. Without being told, he led the two men past the old-world charm of the cottage's sitting-room furniture to the unbefitting elevator, beyond.

As they descended to the super-modern basement of the cottage, which held the secret laboratory of Professor McClaine, Joe glanced with interest at the brief-case held by his father.

Joe knew that inside that leather bag was a reel of tape and soon that tape would be threading its way around the revolving bobbins and spools of the B.I.G. R.A.T.

One of the world's most closely guarded secrets, Mac's son, Joe, was able to receive the brain patterns of any individual so that when the process of transfer from the B.I.G. R.A.T. computer was complete, the ten-year-old boy would adopt the thoughts and ideas of the brain patterns' *owner*. Then Mac's son would become *JOE 90*!

The cage of the Rat Trap whirled dazzlingly, feeding the taped thought impulses through the electrodes, attached to his head, into Joe's mind.

Critically watching the time, Mac slowed the machine to a halt and carefully helped Joe from the Rat Trap's chair.

Joe climbed into the cage of the Rat Trap

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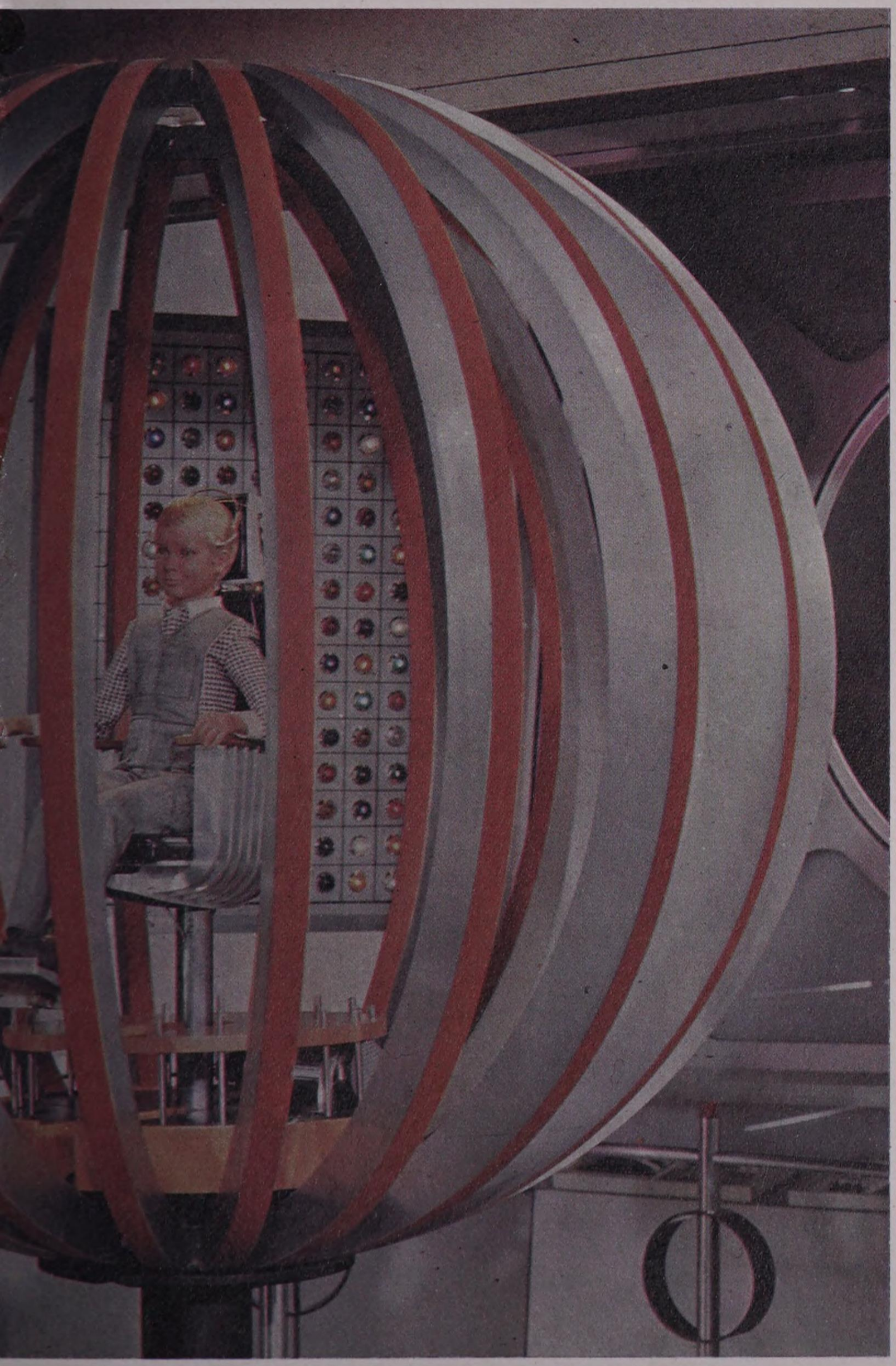
"Well, Joe," murmured Sam, his voice tense with excitement as he looked into the boy's blue eyes. "Can you tell us anything?"

As Joe slipped on his special, electrode glasses, many thoughts began to race through his mind. The uppermost impression for those first few seconds was a spine-chilling fear. Then things began to fall into place as Joe's own brain rationalized the new knowledge he had received.

He had the brain of one of the world's most dangerous and expert saboteurs, Frank Lazane. He could even recognize the puzzled thoughts that Lazane experienced when he saw the strange microphone placed on the table before him. Joe realized that the equipment he saw clearly in his mind was Mac's brain-recording apparatus.

"He gave you a hard time at the interrogation," Joe announced at last, smiling grimly at Sam.



"Yes, he wouldn't say a thing. We know he came to Britain on a mission, but he's clever. He knows how and when to keep his mouth shut."

"Don't worry," assured Joe, crossing to a table. "Every question you asked him reminded him of his actions in the last twenty-four hours—and now those memories are here in *my* head."

Joe began to sketch a map, and then the diagram of a building.

"This is where he put the bomb!" Joe paused, waiting for the words to register with Sam and Mac. "In the atomic research plant at Rothesay, in Scotland."

Sudden fear crowded in on Sam. He knew now exactly what Lazane had planned and the consequences could have Earth-shattering repercussions.

"The foreign delegation!" Sam's voice cracked in pitch as he blurted out the words. "They're visiting the Rothesay plant this morning—at nine-thirty."

"Unless that explosive device is dismantled within an hour after their arrival, the plant, the delegation and everything inside a radius of ten miles will be wiped off the face of the Earth!"

Mac shivered involuntarily at Joe's words.

"You'll have to delay the delegation," he suggested sharply, "until bomb disposal experts can render the bomb harmless."

"It's not that simple, Mac," replied Sam, deep in thought. "Imagine what would happen if this gets to the Press. There would be a nation-wide scandal —more—an international incident. We would be accused of all sorts of collusion with the saboteurs."

Joe moved across to the many racks of tape spools which made up the W.I.N. library of brain patterns. He selected one of the spools after a brief search and carried it back to Mac.

"That's the only answer," smiled the boy calmly as Mac's mouth dropped open in surprise. "Sapper John Amery was the best bomb-disposal man the British Army ever had."

Mac's first impulse was to protest. His son's life would be at stake and nothing was more important to the professor than the welfare of the blond-haired boy.

Then Mac remembered Sam's warning about the consequences to Britain's foreign policy and its relations with the countries represented by the delegation and he knew that he could not argue with Joe's plan.

Once again the Rat Trap spun around Joe, and the second brain pattern—that of John Amery—was implanted in his mind.

"Right." Sam's hand rested on Joe's shoulder. "You understand that we cannot alert anyone at the plant. The story will get out for sure if we do."

Joe recognized the sense of Sam's reasoning and nodded gravely.

A W.I.N. jet screamed down to the grey tarmac of the private airfield's runway. Scurries of dust and grass billowed clear of the searing jet exhausts.

"I'll drive you to the perimeter fence," Sam explained as he led Joe down the aircraft steps towards a waiting limousine. "I will collect you at the same point when you've finished."

Mac smiled down at the boy and, in his mind, went through the hurried departure from the cottage less than an hour before. Joe had one-and-a-half hours to get, unseen, into the research station, find the bomb and dismantle it—ninety short minutes that could end in disaster.

The research station stood in the midst of a desolate heathland and a biting wind made the gorse and heather bend to the hard, stony ground. Joe watched the W.I.N. car accelerate away from him, and looked around at the wide expanse of open country.

Two hundred yards away stood a long line of concrete posts, like grotesque statues, with wire-mesh fencing suspended between them to a height of fifteen feet. Joe knew that the fence was electrified but he also knew how Frank Lazane had attached a small nullifying device to the fence to reduce the voltage. Lazane had escaped from the plant by another route and had not collected his device. With luck it would still be working.

Guided by the saboteur's thoughts, Joe found the tiny gadget and smiled reassuringly to himself. With the agility of a healthy ten-year-old, he found adventure in the action of climbing the high fence, his small toe-caps neatly fitting into the mesh.

Another fence. . . Joe edged forwards again. But before he could reach it, the distant purr of a jeep engine made him stop dead. Next moment, he flung himself to the ground, the haversack he had brought with him rolling into some long grass near by.

Clumps of rough earth and high tufts of grass hid his body from the view of the patrolling security guards and they suspected nothing as they passed within a few feet of his position.

Then Joe was running swiftly towards the second fence. He grinned to himself as he noticed the small nullifier—exactly like the first—attached to the wire meshing. Lazane had certainly planned his entry into the research plant well. Jumping lithely down the other side—Joe hurried towards the stark, sombre buildings near the massive retorts and reactor complex.

He gave a swift glimpse at the group of men who were filing into the main administration block and realized the visiting delegates had arrived.

The watch on his wrist weighed heavy as he peered at the black dial. He had taken thirty-five minutes to climb the fences and reach the complex. Fifty-five minutes remained before the bomb would be triggered.

Searching his mind, Joe followed Lazane's thought patterns to the heavy water and isotope store. The canvas haversack on his back banged noisily against the near-by door as he slid back the bolts, reading the ominous message: RADIOACTIVE—EXPLOSIVE MATERIAL—KEEP OUT!

This was a maximum security area of the plant and Joe doubted if even the important visitors would get to see the lead containers that housed the fuel cells for the reactor. If it hadn't been for Sam's special key, Joe would not now be walking into the building.

The minutes seemed to race by as Joe searched down the lines of lead cases and vats of explosive chemicals, trying to find the device. Lazane had obviously chosen a spot at random, for the brain pattern in Joe's head told

The purr of a jeep engine made Joe throw himself flat

him nothing about the precise location of the bomb.

Then he saw it, cleverly concealed behind the network of central-heating pipes which lined the building's walls.

There remained forty short minutes before zero. Joe pondered on the fact as he squeezed his way between the large lead cases to reach the heating pipes. He would have to work in extreme discomfort for, at this stage, he dared not move the strange-looking device with the thick strips of plaster holding it firm on the pipes.

Sapper Amery's mind told Joe that the bomb was only a trigger mechanism.

"That means there must be an awful lot of explosives in this place," Joe told himself as he looked round cautiously.

He examined every inch of the device and was surprised when a small drop of moisture fell to the back of his hand. He was sweating and the tension was building in the part of his mind that was occupied by Sapper Amery's brain pattern.

The long slim screwdriver with the sensitized battery turned the first screw effortlessly. Joe breathed with relief and prayed that all twelve of the screws that held the casing over the mechanism would turn as easily.

Joe had had his share of luck. The fourth—then the fifth screws held firm, cheating Joe from seeing the real works of the trigger.

His hand delved into the haversack again. A tiny battery-powered saw with a blade the thickness of a razor fitted neatly into his moist hand and the two stubborn bolts seemed to melt at the touch of the rapid saw.

Then Joe was removing the cover, fractions of an inch at a time. Beneath the casing he saw the network of wires that led to the timing-mechanism.

The face of the small clock stared up at him and a sweep hand revolved round, ticking off the seconds. Ten minutes to go.

Joe shifted his position to peer behind the bomb and then beneath it, but he could see no wires connecting the device to the explosives in the store.

The mechanism relied solely on a local explosion. Joe could visualize it all too clearly. First a blast from the device—then the stored chemicals would explode and, within seconds, there would be nothing but a deep hole in the Scottish countryside.

"It's quite simple," Joe suddenly said, surprising himself at the uttered words. "All I have to do is unstrap the thing and get it outside. I don't even have to dismantle it."

He bent to start stripping the thick tape from the heating pipes. Then the nagging doubts flashed through his mind. A saboteur of Lazane's reputation would not run the risk of relying only on a timing-mechanism. It was *too* easy.

A cold tingle ran down Joe's spine as he examined the wires and clock again.

Then he saw it, buried beneath the maze of snake-like leads—*a thin red wire*!

"Red for danger," mused Joe, grimly. "If I as much as breathe on that wire the device will operate."

The most special agent wiped the sweat from his eyes as he tried to find a solution. He could not touch the red wire—that was certain. He was stumped.

Five minutes remained—five minutes to destruction.

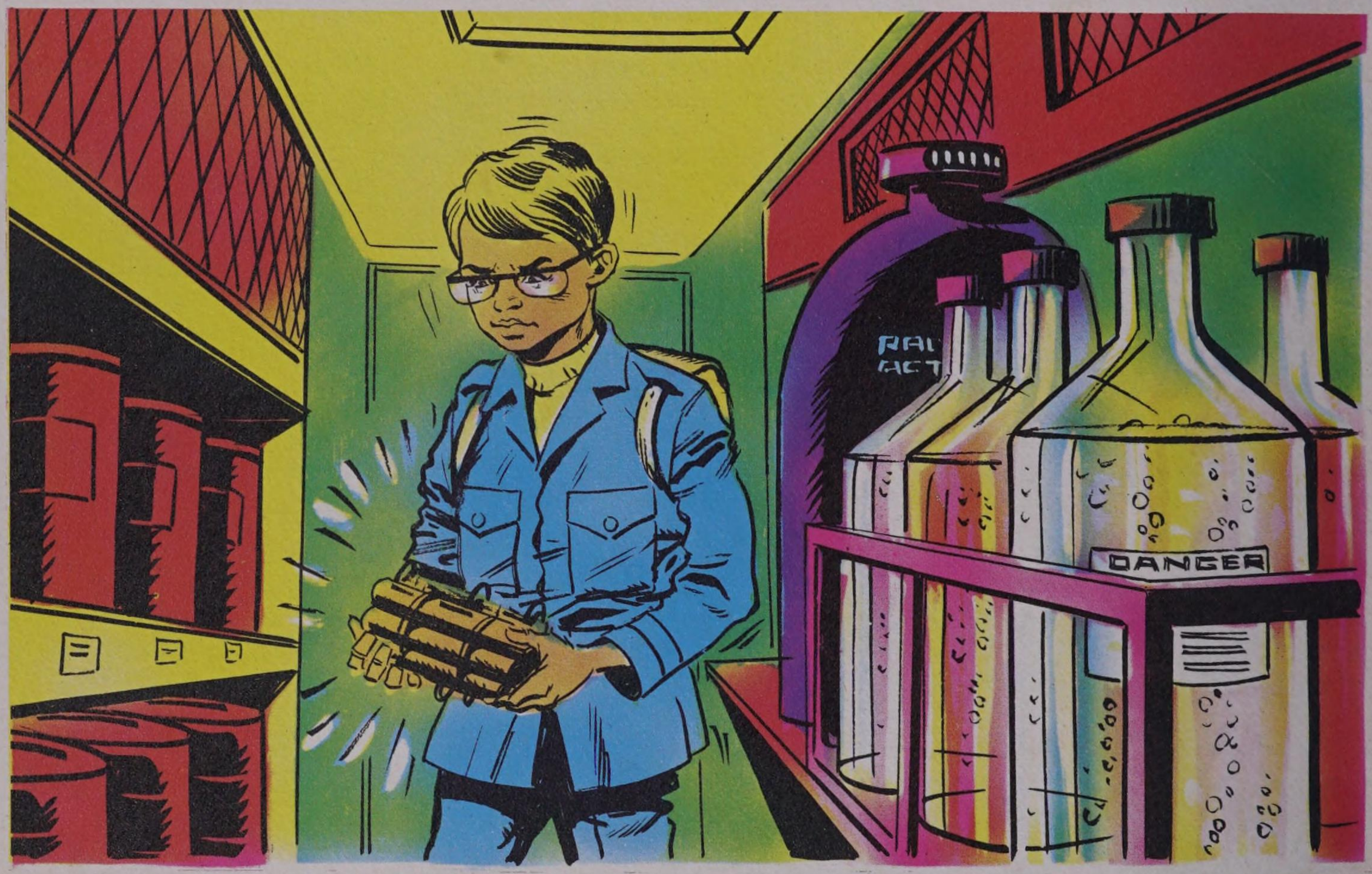
"There's no choice," Joe decided at last. "I've got to take the risk. I've got to unstrap that thing and carry it as far from the explosives as possible."

Joe began work on the tapes, touching them as if they were charged with electricity, hardly daring to blink for fear of tripping the red wire.

"How am I going to be able to keep it steady?" he asked himself.

With a slowness that a snail would have envied, he removed the bomb from the pipes. Then he was inching his way to the door of the building, and the ticking of the device seemed to grow louder with each shuffled step.

His hands shook as he edged his way past the explosive chemicals. He had to stop until he had regained control of his nerves.



The ticking of the device seemed to grow louder as Joe inched towards the door

Then he was moving again, creeping steadily forward.

The device was pressed against his body for support. He seemed to be part of the detonator.

Joe couldn't see his watch so he did not know how much time remained. On he moved, his feet scarcely moving off the floor as he fought to maintain his balance.

The door of the building was shut. He had to release one hand to get out. He chose the right so that he would learn the time. Carefully sliding his hand to the front of the device, Joe pressed the hard case deeper into the pit of his stomach—and slowly reached for the door.

It yawned open easily on well-oiled hinges, and the cool air hit Joe's face in a refreshing blast that shocked his numbed limbs.

The watch told him he had thirty seconds. He calculated that he would probably creep forward three yards in the time—and he was sure the distance would not be enough.

In a flash he had made up his mind. He would take a desperate chance and trust that luck would pay a return visit.

Slowly, surely, he held the detonator in one hand, thrusting it back towards the store's open door.

Then, with all his strength, he hurled the device hard and high in a discus throw.

The bomb whirled through the air towards the open ground that separated the second fence from the buildings.

Joe was already moving towards a parked security vehicle to seek some form of protection when the explosion came. It was loud and powerful—but *not* strong enough to reach the store.

Suddenly, the area was swarming with security men. It was as if they had been released from spring traps in the ground.

Shrugging his shoulders, Joe rummaged once more in the haversack and produced a small book. He marched up to the man he suspected of being in charge of the security forces.

"Hey, mister," Joe said boldly. "Could you get me their autographs? I've been waiting hours at the main gate. I haven't got any really famous signatures in my book."

The journey to Dorset was more leisurely than the one Joe had taken earlier that day. Sam Loover was still smiling at the thought of the security officer ordering Joe out of the plant.

"And he never even asked you how you got in?"

"No, Uncle Sam," chuckled Joe. "I think he assumed I'd got past the guards at the main entrance."

"Well done, Joe. I can't wait to see those foreign delegates tomorrow. I won't be able to tell them what happened, but the thought of knowing will be a real laugh."

"Will you be meeting them?" Joe asked, a plan forming in his mind.

"Yes. I'm providing undercover escort at their hotel in London when they get back from Scotland."

"Then will you do me a favour, Uncle Sam?"

The agent smiled. Joe never asked for rewards or thanks for helping W.I.N. If Sam could do anything for the boy he would be happy to oblige.

"What is it, Joe?"

"Will you get their autographs? You see, I really *would* like them!"

Cranky Franky-the nutty newsboy

THE EDITOR WAS BUSY WHEN FRANKY CALLED IN...

HEY, BOSS! I'LL MAKE SOME NOTES ON MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS!

GOOD IDEA, FRANKY. I'LL CALL IN AFTER LUNCH TO SEE HOW YOU'RE GETTING ON!

I'LL START WITH THIS EUPHONIUM!

START WITH THE WHOLE LOT **ATONCE** IF YOU LIKE - AS LONG AS IT KEEPS YOU **QUIET**!

THAT AFTERNOON...

HELLO! WHAT'S THAT ROW? IT MUST BE FRANKY!

BUT WORSE WAS TO FOLLOW...

IT'S GETTING LOUDER!

GRRR! I'LL NEVER GET ANY WORK DONE!

THEN...

BAH! SO THAT'S WHAT HE MEANT BY **MAKING NOTES**!

PFFWOOP PFFWOOP

THE BOSS TOLD ME TO TRY AND PLAY THEM ALL AT ONCE!

SPACE JUNK

NO-CAN DO!

The Space Pilots' Union sent a protest to the Galactic Control Centre, demanding the removal of the many enormous canisters floating freely in space. Pilots complained that the canisters, containing everything from obsolete satellites to spent rocket stages, offered a direct threat to safety in the likelihood of their causing collisions. Nonetheless, their appeal has been overruled by the G.C.C. which issued a statement quoting:

'SPACE MUST BE KEPT TIDY. THE CANISTERS WERE DISTRIBUTED TO CONTAIN THE MASS OF SPACE-JUNK. HOWEVER, PLANS ARE UNDERWAY FOR THE REDIRECTING OF SPACE-LINERS TO 'CANISTER FREE' AREAS . . .'

"But it's almost new! It's only done five thousand billion miles!"

The THUNDERBOYS

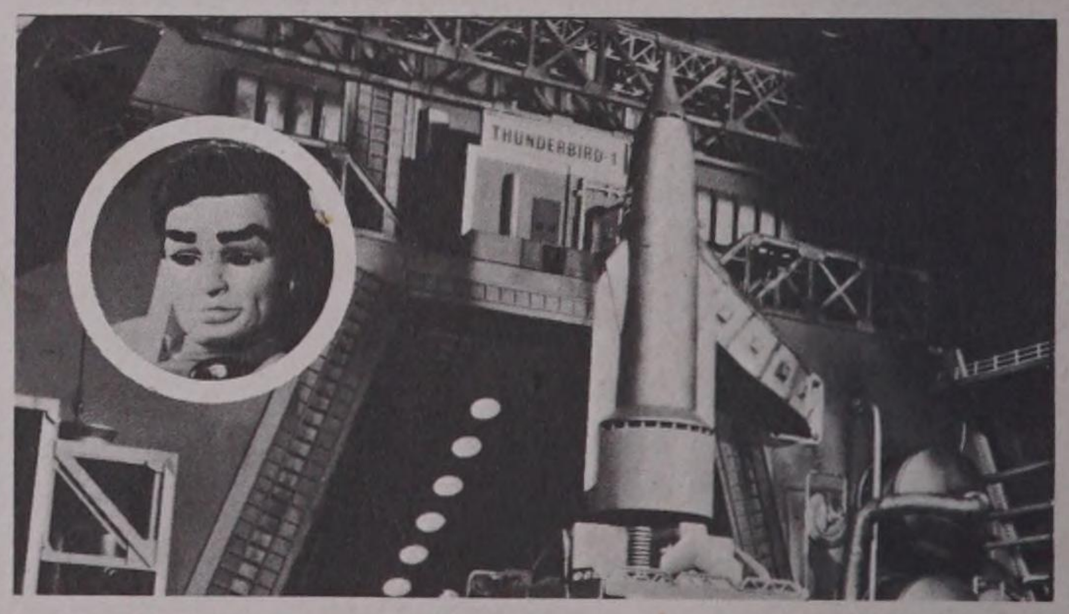
THUNDERBIRDS ARE GO! How many times has Jeff Tracy, head of International Rescue, uttered that order—his words to be drowned, seconds afterwards, by the shattering roar of the rescue craft's exhaust jets? But just *what makes* this the *fastest* and most advanced service in the world? Surely, the answer must lie in the men behind it, for without them INTERNATIONAL RESCUE would never have happened!

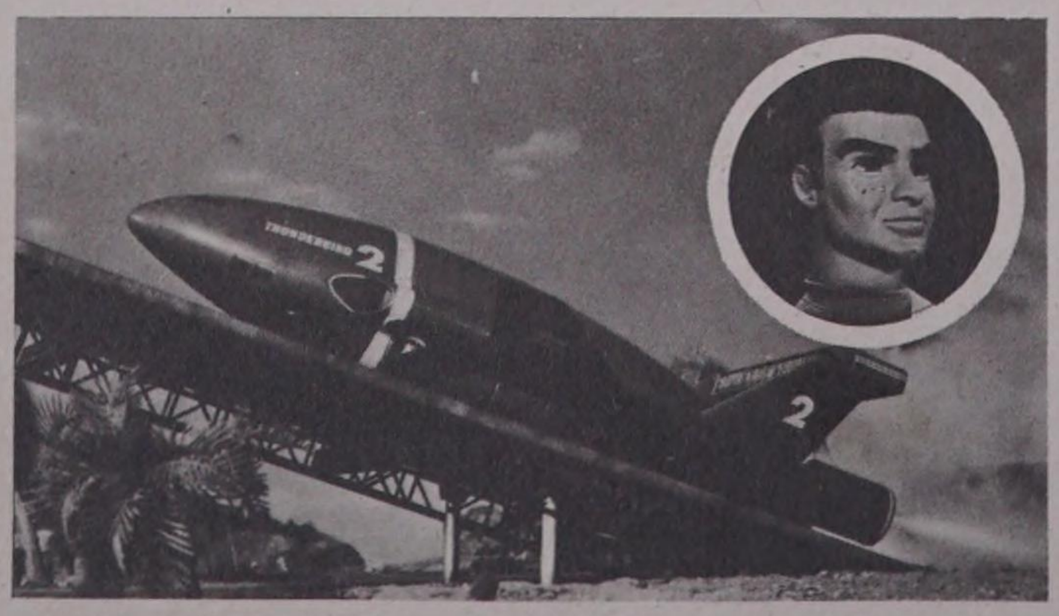
Jeff Tracy

Jeff was a U.S. Air Force Colonel before transferring to Space Agency Projects, where he became a reputed astronaut. After his wife died, he left the post to concentrate on raising his five sons, but later he entered civil engineering to become one of the richest men in the world. His humanity towards others prompted him to use his wealth in developing a cherished dream —International Rescue.

Scott Tracy

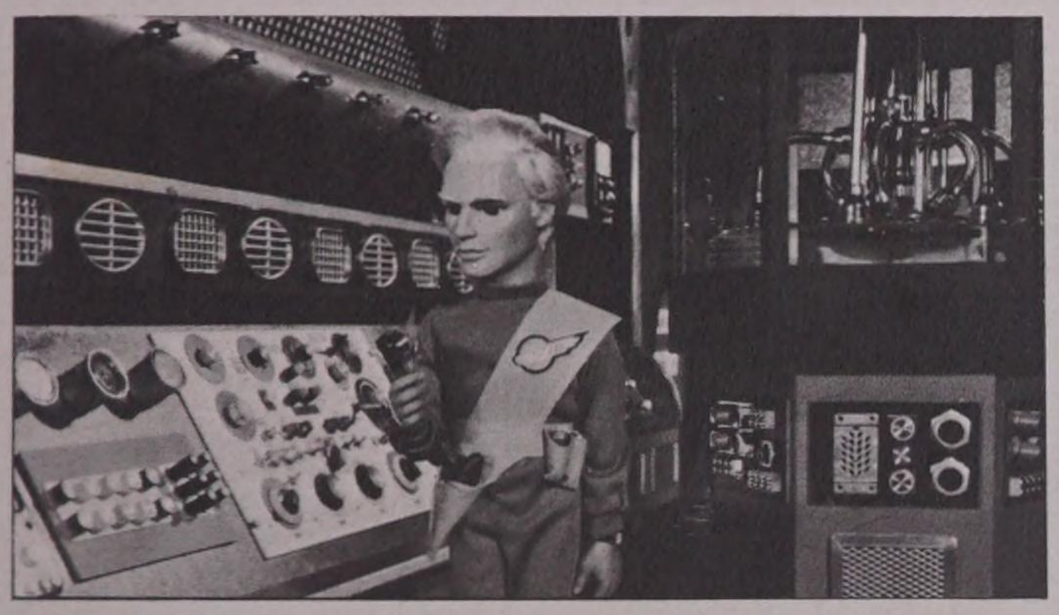
Eldest of the Tracy boys, dark-haired Scott was educated at Yale and Oxford Universities. His courage was first proved during his service with the U.S. Air Force, where he gained many decorations for valour. 'Pilot of Thunderbird One — I.R.'s reconnaissance craft — Scott's duties also include taking control of the organization whenever his father is absent from Tracy Island.





Virgil Tracy

Having graduated from Denver School of Advanced Technology, Virgil is the ideal man to control the varied and complex craft often carried by Thunderbird Two—for which he is acting pilot. Virgil is the most serious of all the family. He forms immediate and definite opinions which, coupled with his iron nerve, makes him a useful man to have around in a tight spot, during rescue operations.

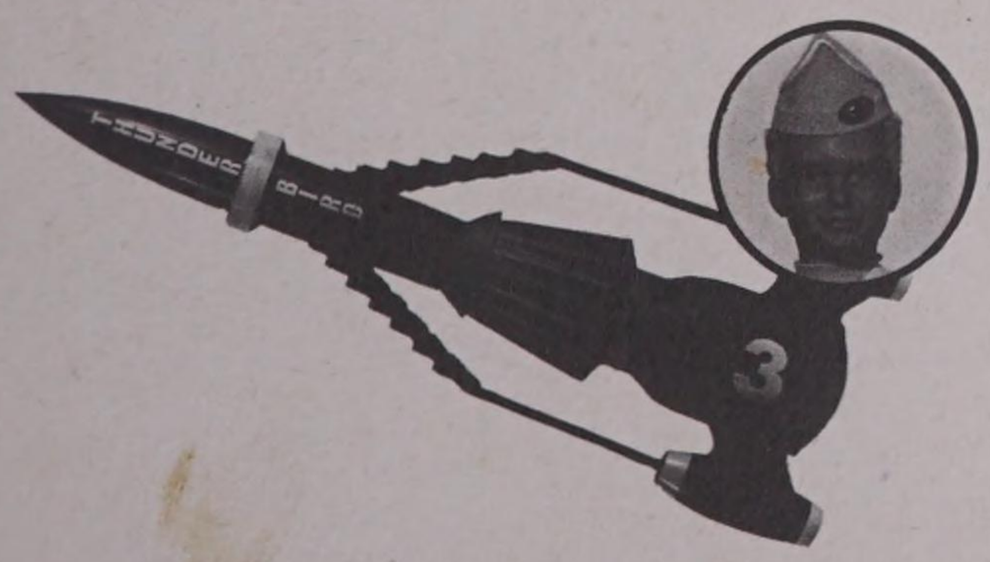


John Tracy

Much of John's time is spent as monitor in Thunderbird Five, I.R.'s space station. On receipt of a radio S.O.S. he instantly informs Tracy Island. John is an electronics expert and also has a degree in laser communications, giving him all the technical knowledge he requires to maintain Thunderbird Five. Like his father, John was at one time an astronaut. Occasionally, he is relieved by Alan Tracy.

Gordon Tracy

Aquanaut in charge of Thunderbird Four, Gordon is an all-water-sportsman. His period in the Submarine Service and, later, the World Aquanaut Security Patrol, enabled him to become an expert in oceanography. Additionally, he is one of the world's fastest free-style swimmers and a past Olympic champion at the butterfly stroke. Undoubtedly, Gordon is as much at home below water as above it!



Alan Tracy

Spacecraft Thunderbird Three comes under the control of Alan, who graduated at Colorado University. From an early age, Alan was interested in space travel and later proved himself to be an expert astronaut, passing all his examinations with grade 'A one'. In addition to acting pilot for Thunderbird Three, Alan also shares duty with John on the space radio station.

Brains

The only 'outsider', Brains is nonetheless a vital member of the Thunderbird team, for without him the island base and all the superb, sophisticated craft at their disposal, could not have been constructed. An orphan of incredible scientific capability, Brains' hobbies include trigonometry and thermodynamics. It was Brains' genius that enabled International Rescue to become a reality.

THE GREATEST PLAYER EVER

IT WAS ONLY A FEW DAYS BEFORE CHRISTMAS BUT SAM HIGGS, MANAGER OF MILLTOWN RANGERS, WAS IN ANYTHING BUT A FESTIVE MOOD...

OF ALL THE LUCK! THE VERY MORNING OF THE MATCH AND MY TOP STRIKER SPRAINS HIS ANKLE. HOW AM I GOING TO GET ANYBODY *GOOD* TO TAKE HIS PLACE?

CHARITY FOOTBALL MATCH

MILLTOWN RANGERS v DARCHESTER UNITED

THE ECHO

KING PAUL OF BALAVIA IN ENGLAND

SAM WAS TALKING MORE TO HIMSELF THAN TO HIS YOUNG SON, TIMMY...

EVERY YEAR WE LOSE AGAINST DARCHESTER. JUST FOR ONCE I'D LIKE TO WIN - EVEN DRAW! IF ONLY I HAD ONE *REALLY GOOD* PLAYER!

RANGERS

DAD, THIS IS CHRISTMAS - A TIME FOR MAKING WISHES! IF YOU WISH *HARD* ENOUGH, MAYBE IT *COULD* COME TRUE!

AS SAM HIGGS STALKED OFF TO THE RANGERS' STADIUM...

DID YOU HEAR THAT? WISHES COMING TRUE, HUH! WHAT RUBBISH!

THEY DID NOT NOTICE THE TALL, ATHLETIC STRANGER WHO HAD OVERHEARD THEM...

THEN YOU GO AHEAD AND *WISH*! MAYBE YOU'LL CONJURE UP A PLAYER OUT OF THIN AIR, EH? SOME HOPES!

WELL, I BELIEVE IT. AND I WANT RANGERS TO WIN TODAY AS MUCH AS DAD DOES! SO **I'M** GOING TO WISH THAT HE GETS THE PLAYER HE NEEDS!

CHRISTMAS IS A TIME FOR WISHING! IT WOULD BE MARVELLOUS TO PROVE THAT LAD RIGHT - BY GLORY, I'LL DO IT!

THE STRANGER WAS ALLOWED TO ENTER THE STADIUM AND SEE SAM...

IT'S A **CHARITY**, NOT A **LEAGUE** MATCH, MR. HIGGS. AND YOU **DO** WANT A PLAYER! SO WHY NOT **TRY** ME?

IT'LL BE A WASTE OF TIME. BUT, OKAY— BOB, BOOT THE BALL OVER HERE!

SELDOM HAD SAM SEEN A BALL TRAPPED SO NEATLY...

MAY I TRY FOR THE **GOAL**, MR. HIGGS?

FROM HERE? GO AHEAD. BUT IF YOU GET WITHIN *TEN FEET* OF THE NET I'LL EAT MY HAT!

SWIFTLY THE STRANGER APPRAISED DISTANCE AND ANGLE. THEN...

IT CAME LIKE A ROCKET! I HARDLY **SAW** IT!

WHAT AN IN-SWINGER!

MR. HIGGS, IF YOU WANT TO TRY ME OUT ANY MORE PERHAPS YOU COULD LEND ME SOME PROPER BOOTS!

FIVE MINUTES LATER...

LOOK AT HIM DRIBBLE! YOU'D THINK THE BALL WAS *GLUED TO HIS FOOT!*

AND WHAT *SPEED!* HE'S HEADING UP THE FIELD LIKE AN OLYMPIC SPRINTER!

SAM HAD SEEN ENOUGH...

COME ON, WE'LL SEE THE CHAIRMAN AND HAVE YOU SIGN ON! YOU'RE THE GREATEST THING THAT'S HAPPENED TO FOOTBALL SINCE... SINCE... DARN IT, *THE GREATEST EVER!*

I'LL SIGN IF YOU *WANT* ME TO, MR. HIGGS. BUT, REMEMBER, IT'S JUST FOR **TODAY**!

I STILL THINK YOU'RE CRAZY! YOU COULD BE FAMOUS! AH, WELL, IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT. HEY, I DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR NAME...?

MY NAME? ER... PAUL! *REX PAUL!*

THAT AFTERNOON, AS THE CROWDS POURED IN...

IT HAPPENED, TIM! FROM RIGHT OUT OF NOWHERE! THE GREATEST PLAYER **EVER**! AND THE NUTTY THING IS – *NO ONE'S EVER HEARD OF REX PAUL!*

IT'S WHAT I WISHED FOR YOU, DAD. AND I ALSO WISHED THAT WE'D BEAT DARCHESTER UNITED TODAY!

SUDDENLY SAM FROWNED AS A SMALL DOUBT CROSSED HIS MIND...

OH, MY GOSH! MAYBE HE DOESN'T WORK SO WELL IN *A TEAM*! HE'S SO TERRIFIC - THERE *HAS* TO BE SOMETHING WRONG WITH HIM!

DON'T WORRY, DAD! THE FIRST HALF OF MY WISH HAS COME TRUE. I *KNOW* THE SECOND PART WILL!

WITHIN SECONDS OF KICK-OFF, SAM HIGGS REALIZED HE NEED NOT HAVE WORRIED AT ALL...

OH, *NICELY* DONE!

WHAT DID THE ANNOUNCER CALL HIM? MILLTOWN'S *CAPTAIN FOR THE DAY* – ***REX PAUL!*** THAT'S HIM – NUMBER EIGHT!

THE BALL STREAKED OUT TO THE WING, THEN BACK TO PAUL...

HE'S GOT THE BALL AGAIN! BUT WHAT'S HE *DOING*?

HE'S STARTING TO TAKE IT *THE WRONG WAY!*

SAM'S FINGERS WERE TEARING AT HIS HAIR...

LET IT GO! HE'S DRAWING THE WHOLE DARCHESTER DEFENCE TO HIM! *GET RID OF IT!*

DOESN'T HE *WANT* TO SCORE? WHOSE SIDE'S HE **ON**?

TRAINER

THEN...

UNITED'S GOAL'S WIDE OPEN!

HE'S CHIPPED IT OVER TO LOFTY! GET AT IT, LOFTY – *HEAD IT IN!*

WITH SUCH AN ACCURATELY FLIGHTED BALL ALL MILLTOWN'S LANKY WINGER HAD TO DO WAS GET HIS HEAD IN THE RIGHT POSITION, AND...

IT'S IN! AND TO THINK LOFTY RECKONED THAT WAS THE ONE THING HE COULDN'T DO – *HEAD!*

RRRAAAAYY! *MILLTOWN!*

TEN MINUTES LATER, ANOTHER ROAR MADE THE MILLTOWN WINDOWS RATTLE...

PAUL'S PASSED IT AGAIN – *GINGER'S GOT IT* – ***IT'S THERE!***

TWO UP! HOOOORRAYY! *MILLTOWN!*

DARCHESTER UNI

THE ECHO

BALAVIA MONARCH ON STATE VISIT

WORRIED, THE DARCHESTER TEAM TRIED TO HIT BACK...

TAKE IT THROUGH, UNITED!

UP THE RANGERS

PAUL'S MOVING BACK! LOOK AT HIM *GO!*

SUDDENLY, THE NEW PLAYER BROKE THE ATTACK...

HE TOOK IT RIGHT OFF HIS BOOT! THE BALL'S BACK WITH MILLTOWN! WHAT'S HE GOING TO DO NOW?

AGAIN, REX PAUL CAUGHT EVERYONE BY SURPRISE, SAM HIGGS INCLUDED...

HE'S GIVEN IT TO REG GRAY!

WHAT'D HE DO THAT FOR? THERE WAS AN OPENING RIGHT UPFIELD FOR PAUL TO TAKE IT THROUGH HIMSELF – BUT HE HANDS IT OVER TO A *HALF-BACK!*

THEN IT WAS THE TURN OF MILLTOWN'S STOCKY WING-HALF TO AMAZE THE FANS...

HE NEVER PLAYED LIKE *THAT* BEFORE! FIRST LOFTY, NOW REG – THEY'RE DOING THINGS *EVEN THEY* NEVER *DREAMT* THEY COULD!

LOOK AT REG GO!

REG GRAY PUSHED THE BALL THROUGH ACCURATELY FOR REX PAUL TO FINISH...

IT'S AS GOOD AS THERE! A PLAYER LIKE REX *CAN'T* MISS THIS ONE!

HERE IT COMES – GOAL NUMBER THREE!

BUT...

WHAT IN...? A *CERTAIN* GOAL— AND HE *PASSED* THE BALL...

PETE SALES WILL *NEVER* TRY A SHOT FROM THAT DISTANCE - HE JUST *CAN'T* DO IT!

TRA

AND UP CAME SURPRISE NUMBER THREE - PLUS MILLTOWN'S THIRD GOAL...

IT'S IN THE NET! PICK IT OUT, DARCHESTER!

HE *DID* IT! WHAT'S COME OVER THEM ALL TODAY?

THE SECOND HALF PASSED AS SUCCESSFULLY. DURING THE FINAL MINUTES THE SCORE WAS - MILLTOWN FIVE, DARCHESTER NIL...

COME ON, MILLTOWN!

WE WANT SIX...

REX HAS GOT IT AGAIN!

SUDDENLY...

REX IS DOWN!

DARN IT! I WAS HOPING TO SEE *HIM* NET THE BALL FOR A CHANGE! BET IT'D BUST RIGHT THROUGH!

BUT EVEN WITHOUT THE INCREDIBLE REX PAUL TO BACK THEM UP, THERE WAS NO STOPPING MILLTOWN NOW...

MILLTOWN! MILLTOWN!

THERE GOES THE FINAL WHISTLE! IT'S *MILLTOWN'S* GAME!

LATER, IN THE MILLTOWN DRESSING ROOM, A SUDDEN THOUGHT OCCURRED TO SAM...

DARN IT, *NOW!* I REALIZE - REX PLAYED, NOT FOR HIMSELF, BUT *TO BRING OUT THE BEST* IN YOU FELLERS. AND HE *DID!* YOU WERE SO CONFIDENT WITH HIM AROUND, YOU TRIED THINGS YOU NEVER THOUGHT YOU COULD DO BEFORE!

THAT'S RIGHT, SAM! WE'RE A BETTER TEAM FOR HAVING HIM SHOW US WHAT WE COULD DO. *HEY*, WHERE **IS** REX?

AS SAM HURRIED TO THE GATE...

PLAYERS & OFFICIALS ENTRANCE

I WAS COMING TO TELL YOU, MR. HIGGS. HE SAID TO SAY GOODBYE, AND HE RAN TO CATCH THE TRAIN TO LONDON...

GONE? THE GREATEST PLAYER *EVER* – AND I LET HIM SLIP RIGHT THROUGH MY FINGERS!

IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE, TIMMY. A GREAT PLAYER LIKE HIM WHO, AS FAR AS I CAN MAKE OUT, HAS NEVER PLAYED FOR A TEAM BEFORE. WHERE DID HE COME FROM? WHERE HAS HE GONE NOW?

PERHAPS HE WAS JUST *A WISH COME TRUE*, DAD! I *DID* WISH FOR HIM – AND HE PROVED THAT WISHES *DO* COME TRUE!

SEVERAL HOURS LATER, IN LONDON...

WELL, YOU HAD YOUR DAY! EVERYONE HERE THINKS YOU WERE RESTING! WAS IT WORTH IT?

INSIDE THE HUGE BUILDING...

I WENT TO A FOOTBALL MATCH. IT WAS WONDERFUL. BUT IT WASN'T JUST THE GAME THAT PLEASED ME SO MUCH...

AH, FOOTBALL! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN! I KNOW LITTLE OF THE GAME, BUT EVER SINCE YOU WERE A LITTLE BOY, I RECOGNIZED THAT YOU WERE A MASTER...

YOUR FATHER RECOGNIZED IT, TOO. IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO GO TO SCHOOL LIKE OTHER BOYS – BUT HE DID EMPLOY THE FINEST PLAYERS IN OUR COUNTRY TO KEEP ALIVE THIS GIFT...

... BUT ALL OF US HAVE TO SACRIFICE SOMETHING. JUST AS YOU HAVE HAD TO SACRIFICE YOUR BELOVED FOOTBALL – TO BE **KING PAUL OF BALAVIA!**

I ENJOYED MY 'DAYOFF' – AND I'LL NEVER FORGET IT! BECAUSE I THINK I PROVED TO A LITTLE BOY THAT CHRISTMAS **IS** 'A TIME FOR WISHING'!

ABOVE

Click!

The reinforced door slid smoothly shut, sealing me off from the outside world.

Beside me, the uniformed operator turned to a control panel set in the steel-lined wall. I watched his index finger make contact with the round button . . .

Suddenly, the whole compartment leapt upwards, accelerating away in a vertical climb. My knees bent slightly under the unexpected thrust, my ears sang with the sudden change in pressure.

I looked across at the operator. He was calmly inspecting his fingernails. He'd done it all before. Many times. But for me, 'take-off' at 1,000 feet a minute was a shatteringly new experience.

Within what seemed to be brief seconds, we started to slow, then stopped. A brief gasp of compressed air and the door slid open.

I stepped out cautiously into a glass-walled gallery. It was an incredible sight. The whole of London stretched below me in an endless panorama. In one glimpse were five of England's counties: Kent, Surrey, Essex, Hertfordshire and Berkshire. To the west I could see as far as Windsor Castle's squat round walls, to the east as far as the Thames Estuary, where England's greatest river poured into the bleak North Sea. I could see docks and churches, green hills and thousands of little grey houses, the homes of London's eight million people.

I was standing on the roof of London, at the top of Britain's tallest building—the *Post Office Tower.*

Dominating London's skyline, this monument to modern technology cost £2,500,000 to build. It is a fantastic experience to visit the observation gallery, but the tower wasn't built just to give you a better view of London. It has a much more important function.

In the fifties, the Post Office chiefs realized that the G.P.O. was faced with an ever-increasing problem. More and more people were using telephones to make long-distance calls—and the authorities were running out of cables to carry the messages! Laying new cables is a slow and expen-

THE SKYLINE

sive business, so the Post Office boffins came up with a brilliant idea. Why not transmit telephone calls by invisible radio microwaves?

As a result, a countrywide network of microwave transmitting and receiving stations was planned, centred on London. But there was one big set-back. Because microwaves are like beams of light and can only travel in straight lines, the central transmitting and receiving station had to be built tall enough to clear surrounding hills and skyscrapers. The G.P.O. planners got to work on their drawing-boards. They designed a transmitter taller than the highest hill, a transmitter that could handle 100,000 two-way telephone calls and 40 television channels *at the same time!*

Today, just ten years after the tower was but a science-fiction dream on sheets of paper, it is 130,000 tons of stark reality, rising 600 feet and more above London's streets. Inside the shimmering glass, steel and concrete shell, every inch of space is taken up, most of it by complex telephonic equipment.

To understand how the tower is constructed, imagine a very long bolt, standing on its end. Now think of a dozen nuts threaded on to the bolt, with a gap between each one. The bolt is the central concrete core of the tower, in which the two high-speed lifts operate. The nuts are the different floors, supported by the central core, and not at their edges, as in a normal building.

At the top of the central core is the most incredible restaurant in the world. Like a roundabout in slow-motion, it *revolves*. Diners have a huge, ever-changing vista of London as they eat. (Imagine: Soup-staring towards Surrey, main course towards Berkshire, sweet towards Hertfordshire, and Essex in the background when you pay the bill!)

If you don't feel like spending a few pounds on a good meal (or can't afford to, like most of us), you can always visit the observation gallery on the floor below. That will only cost you four shillings and, as it feels just like being up in an aeroplane, it's a trip worth taking!

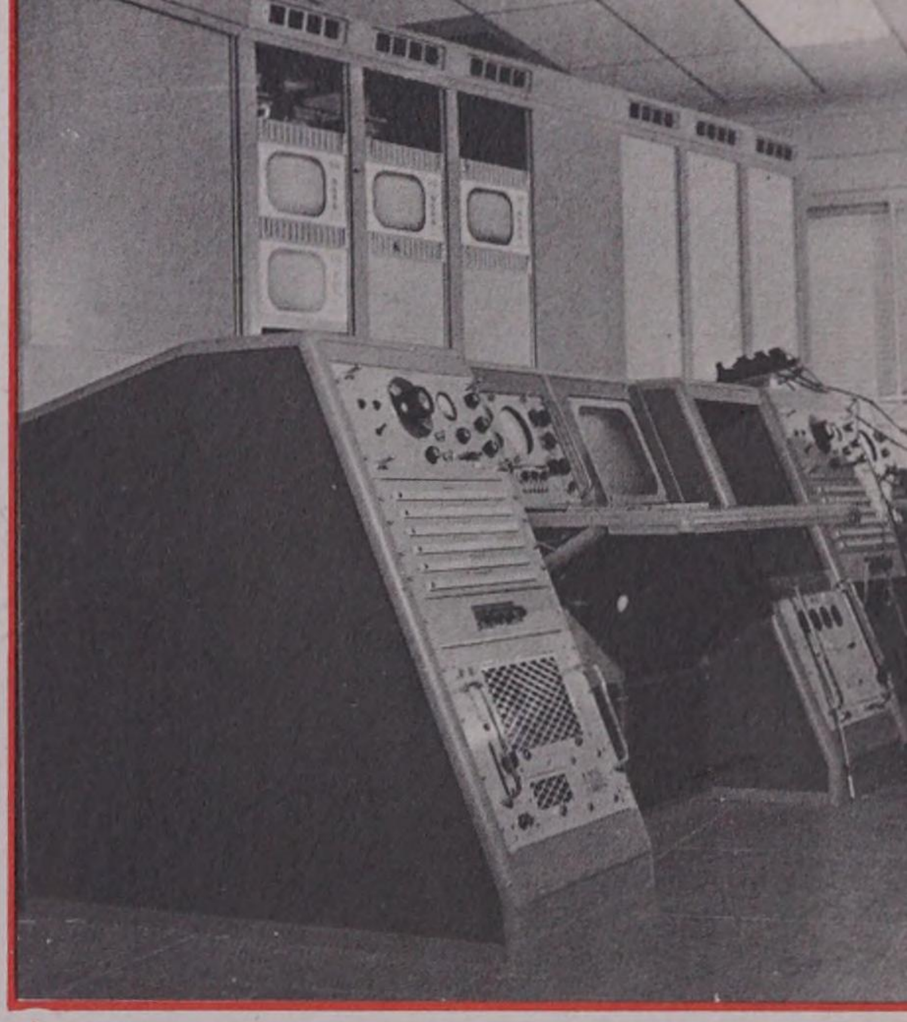
TOWER FACTS

The height
of the tower is over 600 feet—higher than a pile of 157 Minis or 28 two-storey houses!

The weight
is 130,000 tons—heavier than two QE2 liners or more than 2 million fully-grown people!

The cost
of the complete building was £2½ million—or nearly *£350 per inch!*

The windows
cover a staggering 50,000 square feet—the equivalent of more than 23 tennis courts!

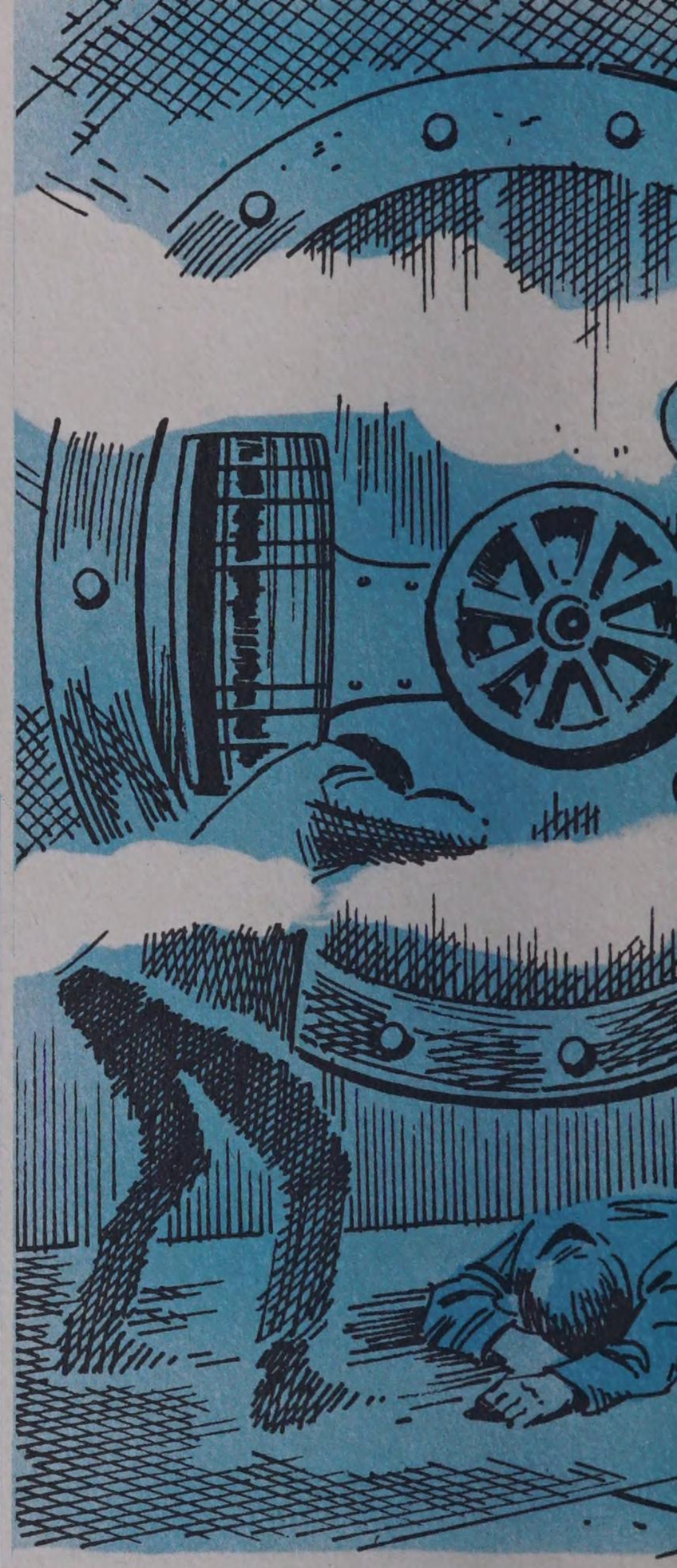


All incoming and outgoing TV signals are monitored in the Control Room, which is also responsible for the switching of the I.T.A. Network.

Part of the function of the TV repeater station is to amplify all signals prior to monitoring in the Control Room.

Day of the DOG

SECRET AGENT 21



Warm sunlight bathed the wide highways and the glittering glass and steel skyscrapers of 21st Century London. It reflected from the cool purity of the Thames and gilded the leaves of the tall poplars which flanked the Embankment. London, clear-skyed and smokeless, wore the fresh beauty of spring.

On Route 212 of the overhead highway a silver sports car, its design revolutionary, crossed to the third lane and slowed to a crawling 50 m.p.h. Its driver, bronzed and athletic, was accompanied by a large Alsatian dog which viewed everything passing with interest. This was surprising, for Kingdom—the dog—was a robot; a robot so lifelike and natural that the difference was impossible to tell.

Brent Cleever, the driver, was a travelling toy salesman. At least, this was his normal identity. In fact he was Agent 21 of the famed Universal Secret Service, though again it would have been impossible to tell.

"Kingdom, old son, we're getting out of practice," he grinned, aware of the large tail thumping in pleasure beside him. "Two months now and all negative reports. The International Crime Syndicate must have suffered too many losses to dare lift its head."

Kingdom growled throatily, shifting position to settle comfortably against Brent's left shoulder. There was a hint of uneasiness in the soft growl.

"You're too lifelike! That computer-fed intelligence of yours almost worries me," Brent murmured, watching the highway. "Settle down, boy! Or are you thinking about chasing robot cats?"

The first swirl of light mist caught his glance and made him ease the accelerator. Within minutes, however, the speed of all traffic had been forced down to walking pace. The mist, eerie and sinister, closed in with baffling, uncanny speed.

Shapes became shadows, lights failed to penetrate a milky whiteness which seemed to choke and destroy the faintest glow of illumination; the red orb of the sun could no longer be seen.

This was not all; events were soon to show the mist was unnatural. Radar devices became jammed, unable to record any signals. The infra-red units for dispelling mist would no longer work.

Cars jammed on the highways. A helibus crashed into a descending space-freighter. A terrible, sticky blanket of impenetrable whiteness cut off London as surely as if invading troops had taken control of it. Terror and chaos followed, frightened people packing within any building they were lucky enough to find.

Brent abandoned his car. He knew without telling that no mere chance caused this dislocation of London and its services. He could see nothing, only the thick wall of mist swirling about him. He had to feel to clip on Kingdom's lead.

Yet Kingdom could see. The robot dog had inbuilt senses which nothing could damage. Brent was led through the whiteness as a blind-man might have been led by his guide-dog. People were reeling past, colliding with each other and with invisible objects. In terror they finally gave up and just remained where they stood.

A whole city ground to a halt. Air and space links were severed; and with the severing came growing terror. For the mist stayed, and with it came the thing Brent had feared. The International Crime Syndicate struck!

Two miles away, within a huge Merchant Bank, the mist invaded through doors, windows and the circulatory air system. Inner lights died, unable to penetrate the eerie blanket which smothered all light at source. Yet certain men moved. They arrived from nowhere, wearing dark

The raiders arrived from nowhere, wearing dark goggles and carrying stun-guns, as the mist smothered all light.

goggles and carrying stun-guns. They at least could see! When they fired, no single shot missed!

Unconscious guards, tellers and customers sprawled where they fell; it would be hours before they recovered. The invaders worked with military precision and speed.

Vaults were blasted open. The latest equipment, expertly handled, dealt with security devices and strong-boxes. The haul would equal two million pounds.

The raid took forty minutes, then the raiders vanished outside into the mist-swirling wall of clammy whiteness. When the mist lifted, which it did three hours later, of loot and raiders there could not be a trace.

Brent arrived as if by chance, though a message from Universal Security, situated on Mars, gave the order. He carried his toy-sample case and was accompanied by the sniffing, highly intelligent dog.

The pass he carried gave him admittance. Even so his entry appeared to be a mistake, for Police Security forced him to leave after querying his papers. At no time was his real cover 'broken'; but it was Kingdom whose uncanny senses picked up the vital clues Brent would need.

One piece of minor equipment had been left by the raiders; Kingdom 'registered' its scent and, no matter what time elapsed, would be able to pick up that scent again. That night, back at his flat, Brent contacted the H.Q. on Mars.

"The Syndicate raiders are probably still in the London area," he reported. "Since they were safe in the mist and perfectly able to see, they would be unwise to try to move their haul far."

"Agreed," came the answer, "we have no knowledge of anything suspicious seen outside the mist area. No transports or space-freighters could leave without attracting attention. Over to you, Twenty-One!"

Brent closed the video-transceiver and, tugged by Kingdom, moved to the skyscraper window. A sheer drop of one hundred and twenty feet dwindled to grass and concrete below.

Outside the door of the flat someone dressed as an attendant placed a small device close to the handle. The man, his manner leisurely, left quite unhurriedly. He allowed himself three minutes for reaching the ground floor.

Ten seconds later there was a blinding flash and the door of

Brent's flat disintegrated. A 'heat-accelerator', its blast striking inwards, wiped out the flat and everything within it. Even window-glass melted in the split-second discharge of all-destroying heat!

Brent Cleever, whom the Syndicate now thought to be dead, whirled dizzily through space, clinging to the fantastic robot supporting him. Above, in the darkness, a ruddy glare showed the terrible havoc wrought by the deadly heat-bomb.

It was to Kingdom that he owed his life. The super-sensitive robot had detected the killer's approach to the door while a collar around the dog's neck flashed a warning. Brent had been tugged to the skyscraper-flat's window, and he knew only too well what that meant.

Now, supported by pressure jets, Kingdom was leaping to the ground, the jets strong enough to carry Brent with him. It was rather like a parachute descent, and hitting the ground carried the impact of a downward jump of ten feet.

Brent rolled over, taking the fall skilfully, though not escaping some bruising. Kingdom, frisking around him, licked him as a real dog might do.

"Chum, you're the greatest," Brent said rather shakily. "When our boffins built you they did the cleverest job of all time."

He slipped away hastily, knowing the crowds would be gathering any moment. Fire-tenders and rescue apparatus must already be on their way, and the last thing he required was publicity. Besides, Kingdom was bounding on swiftly, having again picked up a familiar scent.

"The killer," Brent murmured, running lightly. "Our Syndicate man will be making his getaway while the going is good."

He thought back to his visit to the looted bank and realized that, in some way, his presence must have aroused the Syndicate's suspicions. Rather than take chances, they had decided to eliminate the travelling toy salesman. They were not to know they had failed. Brent ran awkwardly, for slung over his shoulder he carried the large case which contained his samples of rather unusual toys.

Brent Cleever whirled dizzily through space, clinging to the fantastic robot dog.

Suddenly Kingdom stopped dead. There was a sharp bark, a signal to make Brent freeze instantly. A large car sped from a darkened mews in the shadows ahead.

"The escape car—the one used by our 'bomber'. You never make a mistake, Kingdom," he whispered. "Don't worry, the next smart move will be mine."

Brent levelled a strange-looking gun, fired and saw a pin-point of light show momentarily on the back of the escape car. The shot made no sound, neither did its impact. The slug was soft and transmitted a signal—a homing signal which a receiver within Kingdom would pick up.

Ten minutes later Brent's own car was leaving the vicinity, Kingdom seated excitedly beside him. A light glowed from a segment of the dog's usually quite ordinary collar; the light varied with the strength of the signal received.

"We follow, chum. Just that—and at a safe distance," Brent exclaimed cheerily. "No risk of the folk in the escape car being able to see us. If I go wrong anywhere, you just jump out and lead me until I pick up the trail."

Another bark from Kingdom made him 'cut' the motor and pull over to what appeared to be a large tract of parkland. Moonlight gleamed on metal railings, behind which lawns and shrubs stretched away into shadowy darkness. They were on the outskirts of the new Greater London, and the park—if that's what it was—appeared to be part of some estate.

The car they were tailing must have entered this area. Kingdom's behaviour told him so; what it did not tell him was what should be his next move.

"A job for one of my special toys," Brent told the dog. "I'd hate to trigger off any alarms or walk into trouble we can't handle. I'm only *thought* to be dead and I'd hate it to come true!"

From the case he removed a neat toy-like model, the replica of an old World War II Lancaster bomber. He adjusted certain controls and launched it, the four tiny engines only making the slightest of whirrs. Its little gun turrets moved, their perspex agleam in the moonlight.

"That deals with all alarms and warning systems," Brent said, trying to follow its progress. "It's an ingenious 'jamming' device which took nearly three years to perfect."

From the case he next took and launched three tiny aircraft. Soon, these were skimming away into moonlight and darkness. Then after several precautions, Brent and Kingdom finally entered the grounds, a special tool being used to force the railings apart.

It was not a park; moonlight gleamed upon various huge greenhouses. Rare and exotic plants could be seen behind the glass, Brent using a special torch which gave restricted light.

"A Botanical Gardens—privately owned. Rare plants exported," Brent breathed, frowning uncertainly. "Kingdom, I hope we haven't been fooled."

The robot dog, scenting the air, darted off to investigate and vanished into the darkness. A movement troubled Brent and, drawing a pulsator-gun, he slipped into the largest greenhouse nearby. Something had stirred slightly, something which seemed to be watching him. Like a cat he moved warily along the main, central aisle.

Was it a guard? Was the earlier would-be assassin perhaps awaiting a second chance? Brent, skilled in his own dangerous arts, travelled without the slightest of sounds.

He knew he could not be seen now. The foliage of large plants gave him cover, while his own eyes were swiftly adjusting themselves to the dark. He moved very slowly, now waiting and listening. What followed came without warning and at startling speed.

Great tentacles of rustling, terrible strength suddenly encircled him. His gun was paralysed by the grip, his own strength sapped by a pressure which already was almost unendurable.

He was in the crushing embrace of some hideous, uncanny plant!

"Kingdom! Kindom!" Brent's strangled cry husked into the darkness even as he felt his consciousness going. Only his own superb muscle control enabled him to hold on that long.

Glass shattered noisily. The bounding robot, taking its shortest path, crashed headlong through greenhouse panes and reached Brent in one flying movement.

The pressure on Agent 21 seemed to check. The terrible plant, more efficient than any human guard, uncoiled a further tendril to meet the menace. But Kingdom was equipped in a manner no other dog was.

The jaws that closed on the great tendrils could have bitten through steel hawsers. They cut through the plant like a knife cutting through cheese. Brent, his lungs gasping for air, was flung about crazily—then the pressure relaxed altogether. He sprawled to the ground, panting and dimly aware he was miraculously free.

At the same instant light blazed on all round. In the doorway two bleak-faced men raised 'blaster' guns and stared at him mockingly.

"From the Universal Secret Service, I suppose?" the foremost inquired. "You're wasting your time, in fact time is something you're growing quite short of. Keep that dog still! If he even looks at us, you'll be very dead."

Brent arose shakily. His whisper checked Kingdom in the very act of springing. At last he had breath to speak normally again.

"The Boss wants you, agent," the man went on calmly. "Start walking—follow me out and don't try anything foolish." He began to back watchfully.

"Stay!" Brent ordered Kingdom. "Don't move, boy! Not that I've much to lose," he said to the man.

The men of the Syndicate shrugged, their guns quite unwavering. Outside in the grounds two more joined them, one with head hidden beneath an enveloping nylon face-mask.

"About the fog—some kind of chemical vapour?" Brent asked.

"You're so right," the Mask answered. "We won't worry you with details. What interests us is how you managed to trace us. Also how you escaped the bomb?"

Brent said nothing. His gaze was on a gadget held by a newcomer, a gadget he recognized as being a thought-detector. It was in standard use by the interrogators at USS H.Q. on Mars.

"You might as well answer

normally. We can read your mind, with a little more trouble," its operator reminded.

"I know," Brent said, and squeezed the tiny control which was hidden in the material of his suit.

From high above dived three tiny aircraft, the war-time fighter planes, each one a highly dangerous toy. Little machine-guns lanced flame, firing missiles much smaller than pin-heads. They penetrated clothing and swiftly dissolved into the blood.

The targets of the 'toys' felt sharp stinging pain and a most unpleasant sensation. Within minutes they would lose consciousness though otherwise suffer no lasting effect. The attack—swift and startling—caught them by surprise. One man fired at Brent but the agent was no longer before him. Twenty-One had dived flat.

"Get them, Kingdom!" he called.

A hurtling robot shape struck the marksman before he could aim for a second time. His comrades, shouting in fear and surprise, were blasting away at the stunting, wheeling shapes which attacked from the air.

Brent, seeing his chance, took the Mask in one rush, swinging him around and clasping his gun-hand. The 'blaster' now covered comrades who were already beginning to reel.

"Don't fight the drug—don't force me to fire," he said sharply.

The attack—swift and startling—caught them by surprise.

"Gentlemen of the Syndicate, your branch of the business is closing. There's no need to get yourselves badly hurt."

The reeling men dropped their guns and, as unconsciousness claimed them, finally slumped to the ground. Brent carefully allowed the masked leader to gently collapse. There were no further movements. Kingdom frisked to his master and nuzzled his hand.

"The missing loot, Kingdom! My guess is it's hidden in the greenhouses—guarded by plants more sensitive and dangerous than any normal guard-devices," Brent exclaimed thoughtfully. "But that's not really our business. I'll flash an 'alert' to Security on Mars."

From Mars the alert was relayed to Earth's police, using the more official channels and so keeping Brent's 'cover'. Police helicars arrived at the gardens and disgorged their crews.

The Syndicate hoodlums, still unconscious, were safely arrested. Government experts also found and took charge of the complex machine which manufactured the uncanny fog. The missing two millions were, as Brent had suspected, buried within the huge greenhouses used for the growing and export of plants.

"I'd give ten years of my life to lay hands on the agent who caused this," one of the arrested men said to his captors. "Where is he? A fellow with a dog."

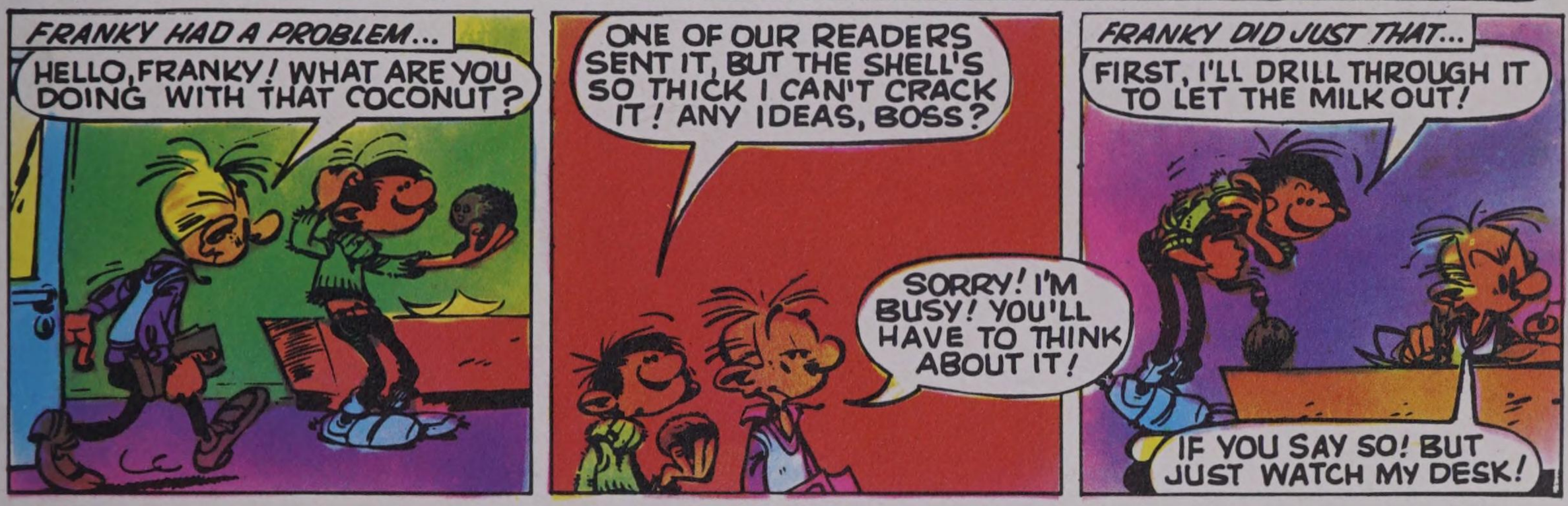
Police officials looked at each other and frowned uncertainly. They also wondered who had managed to cause such havoc among desperate criminals. Their instructions had contained nothing about those forces of law and order responsible.

Miles away now, a smart sports car sped on swiftly. Its driver, whistling cheerfully to himself, had a large case of 'toy' samples and was accompanied by a most appealing dog.

"Mission accomplished, Kingdom," Brent Cleever grinned, patting the sleek head beside him. "Like I've always said, you're a real unusual dog!"

But then of course Brent Cleever —otherwise Agent 21—was also rather an unusual man!

Cranky Franky- the nutty newsboy


FRANKY HAD A PROBLEM...
HELLO, FRANKY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT COCONUT?
ONE OF OUR READERS SENT IT, BUT THE SHELL'S SO THICK I CAN'T CRACK IT! ANY IDEAS, BOSS?
SORRY! I'M BUSY! YOU'LL HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT!
FRANKY DID JUST THAT...
FIRST, I'LL DRILL THROUGH IT TO LET THE MILK OUT!
IF YOU SAY SO! BUT JUST WATCH MY DESK!
THE WARNING CAME TOO LATE...
OOOOPS!
GRRR! LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE! I'LL TELL YOU HOW TO CRACK IT OPEN!
BY USING YOUR NUT! IT'S EVEN THICKER!

SPACE JUNK

By Jupiter!

Following the disappearance of a spaceliner for three months after it had wandered from its original course, new legislation has been introduced. It bans all space-traffic control personnel from using the exclamation 'by Jupiter'! when on the air to spaceborne pilots, in the event of it being confused again for re-routing instructions.

CRAZY QUESTIONS

Why does an astronaut like to be told off?

BECAUSE HE'LL GET A ROCKET!

* * *

Why is an astronaut a bad mathematician?

BECAUSE HE LIKES TO COUNT DOWN!

OVAL ORBIT

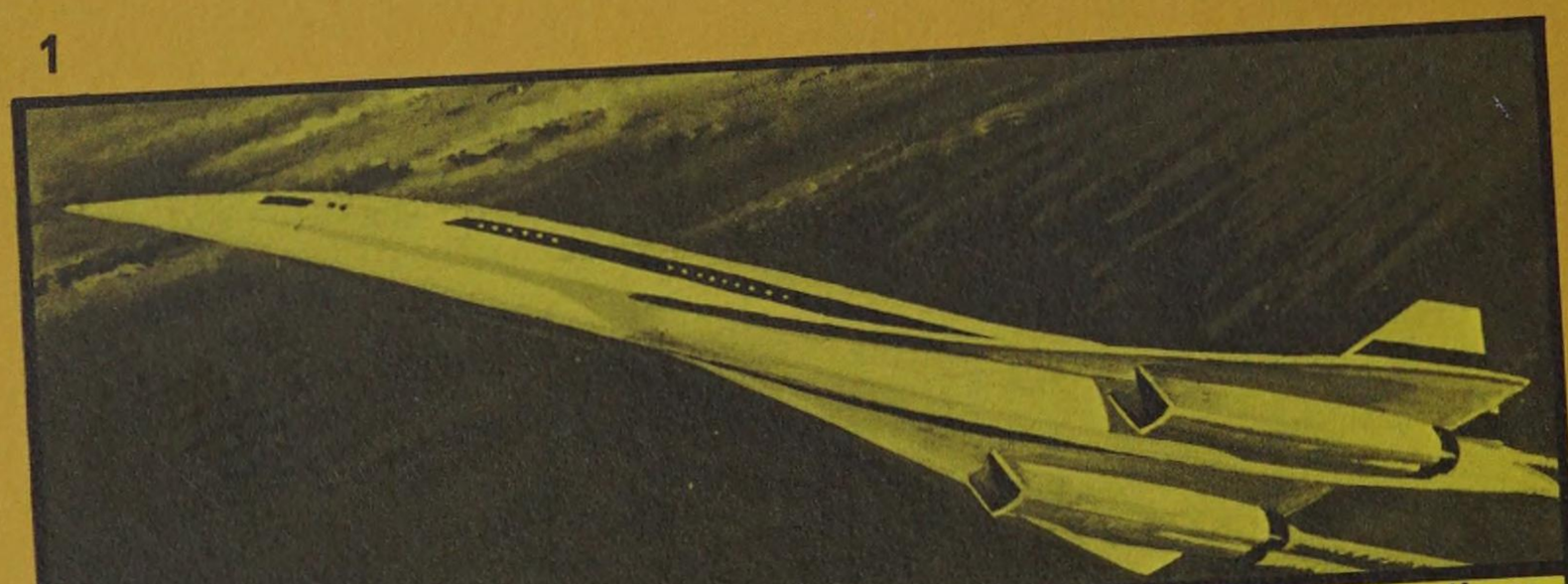
A lost ball stopped play on planet Oval during the test match between the Ovalites and visiting Cricktons—only seconds after the game had commenced! The trouble began when Ovalite fast-bowler, Star Speedon, sent a spinner hurtling down to Crickton's number one batsman. He played a perfect stroke and the ball was knocked for six. But it kept on going! In fact, both players and spectators watched in amazement as the ball soared into the sky and out of view. An investigating spacecraft later discovered the ball, in a regular orbit around Oval.

"It was due to the planet's low gravity," a spokesman commented. "The match will have to be postponed until plans can be made for it to be held on another planet!"

SPOT-A

The captions below do not <u>necessarily</u> correspond with the pictures above them. Why not see just how

1



F The *Caravelle* first flew in 1955 and since then has had many modifications. Powered by two Pratt and Whitney turbofans, it has a span of 112 feet 6 inches, and a cruising speed of 518 m.p.h. It's length is 108 feet 4 inches.

2

C The *BAC 111* carries up 79 passengers, it has a ma mum cruising speed of

5

E A short/medium range air-liner, the *Trident* can accommodate up to 115 passengers. With a span of 98 feet, it has a maximum cruising speed of 605 m.p.h. at 27,000 feet.

4

H The *Skyvan* has a range of 345 miles. This aircraft has a span of 64 feet 1 inch and a maximum cruising speed of 207 m.p.h. at 10,000 feet.

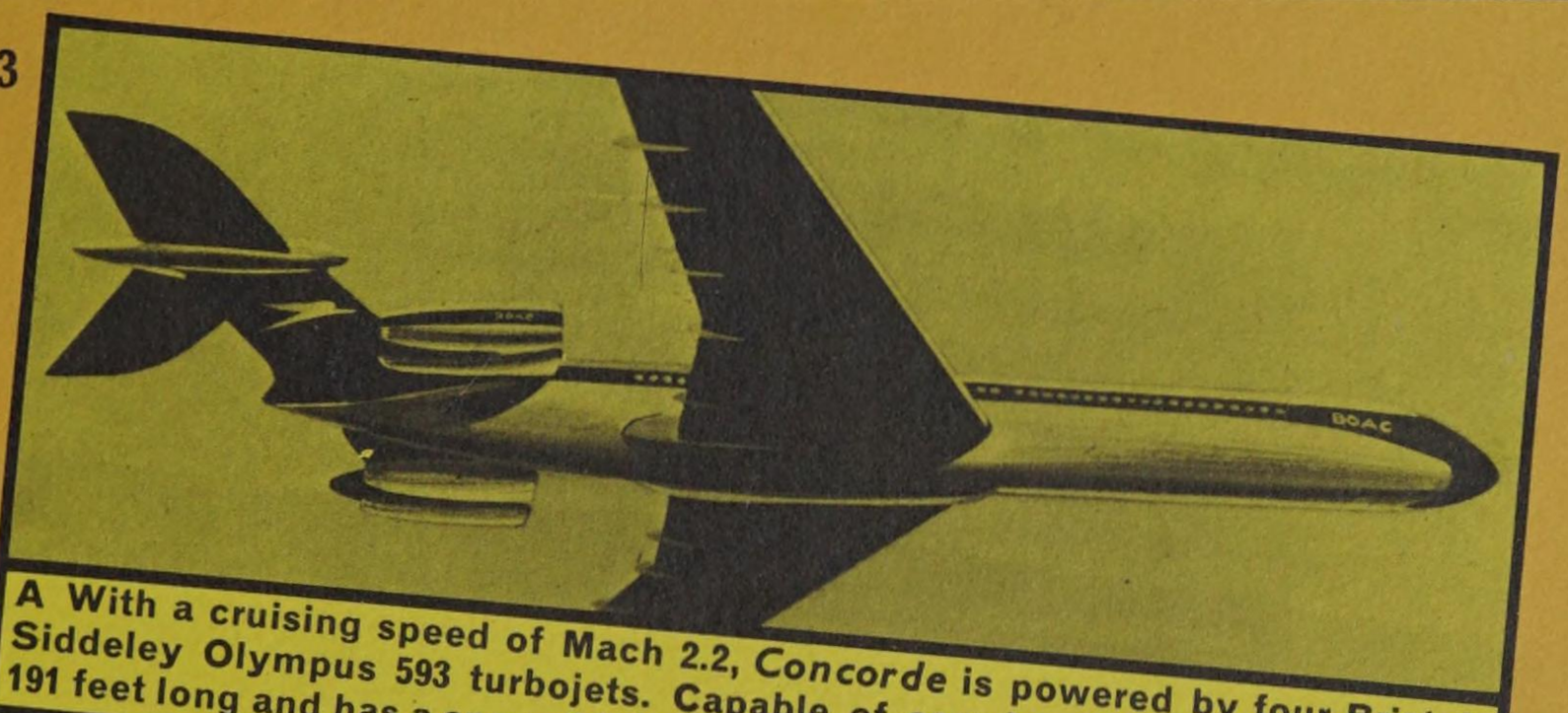
6

D The *DC-9* is a short/medium-ra jet airliner capable of carrying u 115 passengers and has a maxim

PLANE!

good a plane-spotter you are by trying to match them up correctly? The answers are at the foot of the page.

3



A With a cruising speed of Mach 2.2, *Concorde* is powered by four Bristol-Siddeley Olympus 593 turbojets. Capable of carrying 140 passengers, it is 191 feet long and has a span of 83 feet 10 inches.

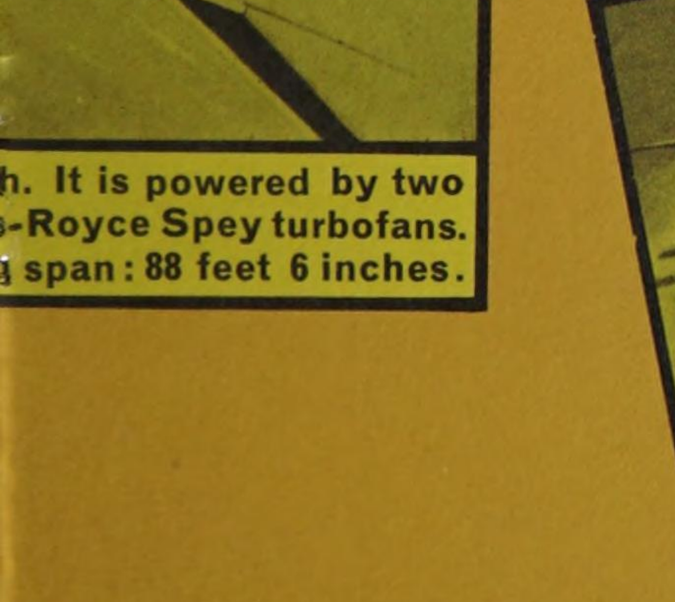
h. It is powered by two -Royce Spey turbofans. span: 88 feet 6 inches.

7

B Capable of carrying up to 77 people, the *Viscount* can cruise at 305 m.p.h. and has four Rolls-Royce Dart engines. It is 85 feet long and has a span of 93 feet 8½ inches.

8

G The Super *VC10* can carry up to 174 passengers, has a length of 171 feet 8 inches and is powered by four Rolls-Royce Conway turbofans.



sing speed of 565 m.p.h. at 25,000 It houses two Pratt and Whitney ofans. Its length is 119 feet 3½ ins.

Answers: 1=A; 2=E; 3=G; 4=B; 5=C; 6=F; 7=H; 8=D.

GERRY ANDERSON'S

ZERO X

THE SWITCH

DESIGNED FOR DEEP SPACE BEYOND EARTH'S SOLAR SYSTEM, ZERO X TRAVELLED AT FANTASTIC SPEEDS. YET STILL A TOUR OF DUTY FOR CAPTAIN PAUL TRAVERS, NAVIGATOR GREG MARTIN AND DOCTOR PIERCE OFTEN CONTINUED FOR SIX MONTHS WITHOUT BREAK...

THERE SHE IS—GOOD OLD EARTH. BOY, AM I GLAD TO BE HOME!

IT'S BEEN A LONG MISSION. WE COULD ALL DO WITH SOME REST.

EXPECTING A 'RED CARPET' WELCOME, PAUL CONTACTED GLENN FIELD SPACE PORT FOR LANDING INSTRUCTIONS...

GLENN FIELD TO ZERO X – PROCEED TO VENTURA LOCAL FOR LANDING.

THE HARSH TONE OF THE GROUND CONTROLLER'S VOICE SHOCKED THE ZERO X CREW...

VENTURA? IS THIS A JOKE? HEY—GLENN FIELD, THIS IS CAPTAIN **PAUL TRAVERS**! YOU KNOW, THE WANDERER RETURNED.

I REPEAT—PROCEED TO VENTURA. YOU ARE VIOLATING GLENN FIELD SPACE LANES.

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PUZZLED AND FURIOUS, CAPTAIN TRAVERS CALLED FOR A NEW COURSE. BUT AS THE GREAT CRAFT'S CONTROL COMPUTERS LOCKED IN TO HEAD FOR VENTURA...

OUT THERE! IT'S LIKE LOOKING IN A MIRROR...

...EXCEPT FOR THE EXTRA ENGINES AND THAT TAIL MOUNTING! WHAT'S GOING ON, PAUL?

MOVING THROUGH THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE TOWARDS THE VACUUM OF SPACE WAS A SPACESHIP ALMOST IDENTICAL TO ZERO X...

THEN, SUDDENLY, IT HAPPENED — AN ALMOST UNDETECTABLE DEFECT. BUT PAUL TRAVERS WAS SURE HE SAW IT...

GREAT SCOTT! WHEN SHE WENT OVER TO HER SECOND BURN MOTORS — THE PILOT LOST CONTROL...

ONLY FOR A MOMENT — BUT YOU'RE **RIGHT**, PAUL.

SOON, THE ZERO X CREW HAD PROBLEMS OF THEIR OWN. VENTURA'S RUNWAY WAS NOT DESIGNED FOR SUCH A HUGE CRAFT...

SHE'S GOING TO OVER-SHOOT...

ZERO X

2

CAPTAIN PAUL TRAVERS CALLED ON ALL HIS SKILL AND SURVIVAL INSTINCTS...

SHE'S STOPPING — BUT WILL IT BE IN TIME?

FINALLY, BREATHING HEAVILY, THE TIRED MEN WAITED FOR THEIR RACING PULSES TO STEADY...

PHEW! THAT WAS CLOSE!

SOMEONE HAD BETTER COME UP WITH A GOOD EXPLANATION FOR THIS MADNESS. WE COULD HAVE BEEN KILLED!

HIS NAGGING WEARINESS FORGOTTEN, PAUL WENT STRAIGHT TO VENTURA'S COMMANDER...

NOW CALM DOWN, PAUL—A LOT HAS HAPPENED WHILE YOU'VE BEEN AWAY. THE SPACE ADMINISTRATION HAS A NEW BOSS — GENERAL LAKELAND.

WHAT HAS HE GOT TO DO WITH FORCING ME TO MAKE AN EMERGENCY LANDING?

COMMANDER BENSON'S SYMPATHIES WERE WITH PAUL...

LISTEN, PAUL, LAKELAND IS KEEN ON A NEW DEEP SPACESHIP—THE **ZERO Z**. THEY'RE TESTING IT AT GLENN FIELD NOW—I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE A BACK SEAT.

WE'LL SEE ABOUT **THAT!**

BRISTLING WITH RAGE, TRAVERS LEFT THE VENTURA COMPLEX. AS HE CLIMBED INTO A STAFF CAR, A FAMILIAR VOICE HAILED HIM...

PAUL, HOLD IT A MINUTE. I'VE GOT A PROBLEM YOU MAY BE ABLE TO HELP ME WITH.

GET IN, JIM—HOW'S THE WORLD OF PRINT?

JAMES SHORT, A NEW YORK NEWSPAPERMAN, WAS AN OLD FRIEND...

I WAS DOING A STORY ON GENERAL LAKELAND, YOUR NEW BOSS. DID YOU KNOW HIS WIFE IS A MAJOR SHAREHOLDER IN 'TITAN ATOMIC'?

GOOD FOR HER! HE'S GOT THE POWER AND SHE'S GOT THE MONEY!

THE CORRESPONDENT REMAINED SERIOUS...

PAUL—'TITAN ATOMIC' IS BUILDING THE **ZERO Z!** DON'T YOU SEE? IF THE GENERAL BUYS THE SHIP FOR SERVICE, HIS WIFE WILL BENEFIT.

THIS IS DYNAMITE! HANG ON, JIM—WE'RE GOING FOR A LITTLE TRIP...

A BRIEF WHILE LATER, TRAVERS AND SHORT TOOK OFF FROM VENTURA IN A MILITARY JET...

DO YOU THINK HE'LL SEE YOU?

HE'LL HAVE TO. THE **WORLD PRESIDENT** IS THE ONLY MAN BIG ENOUGH TO STOP THIS!

BUT WHEN HE REACHED THE PRESIDENTIAL BUILDING, IN UNITY CITY...

I'M SORRY, CAPTAIN—THE PRESIDENT WON'T BE BACK TILL EARLY TOMORROW...

I'LL WAIT!

AS THE HOURS DRAGGED BY, EXTREME TIREDNESS SWEPT OVER PAUL. THEN HE WAS WOKEN WITH A START...

CAPTAIN TRAVERS—IT'S EXTREMELY URGENT...

WAKE UP, PAUL—THE **ZERO Z** IS IN TROUBLE. THEY WANT YOU AT VENTURA...

ON THE RETURN JOURNEY, PAUL WAS TOLD HOW THE **ZERO Z** HAD DEVELOPED A RE-ENTRY DEFECT...

THE CREW MANAGED TO GET OUT, BUT THEY HAVE TO STAY CLOSE TO THE SHIP UNTIL RESCUE—OR THEY'LL DRIFT OFF INTO SPACE.

AND YOU SAY THE ZERO **Z** IS READY TO EXPLODE. I **KNEW** THOSE SECOND BURN MOTORS WERE FAULTY.

THOUGH CONFUSED AND WEARY, PAUL'S MIND **WAS** CLEAR UPON ONE POINT—SAVING THE FOUR ASTRONAUTS. SOON, ZERO **X** WAS READY TO TAKE OFF...

PRE-FLIGHT CHECKS COMPLETED — ALL SYSTEMS GREEN.

EMERGENCY LIFT OFF ON GO— **IGNITION!**

THE GREAT BLUE HULL OF ZERO **X** RUMBLED FORWARD, GATHERING SPEED INCREDIBLY...

THE JOURNEY WAS SHORT, BUT THE CRITICAL APPROACH TO THE HELPLESS SPACEMEN TOOK OVER AN HOUR...

OKAY, PAUL, HOLD HER HERE— IF THOSE BOYS USE THEIR THRUSTERS THEY SHOULD MAKE OUR HATCH...

HURRY IT UP, GREG—THAT HEAP OF METAL IS READY TO BLOW.

ONE BY ONE THE ASTRONAUTS WERE HELPED TO SAFETY...

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE — SHE'S MELTING!

AS ZERO X OPENED TO FULL POWER...

BOOOM!

CAUGHT IN THE BLAST, ZERO X WAS TOSSED LIKE A LEAF...

I CAN'T HOLD HER — WE'RE OUT OF CONTROL!

TIRED MINDS RELAYED URGENT ACTIONS AND, DESPERATELY, PAUL AND GREG FOUGHT THE DANCING CONTROLS...

OUR RE-ENTRY ATTITUDE IS TOO STEEP, PAUL — WE'LL BURN UP!

FIRE FORWARD RETROS — HIT THE BUTTON, GREG.

FINALLY, PAUL TRAVERS FELT THE CONTROLS RESPONDING...

WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT! GET ON TO GLENN FIELD, GREG. TELL THEM WE'RE COMING IN. IF THEY REFUSE THIS TIME...

TRAVERS WAS SURPRISED AS GENERAL LAKELAND'S VOICE CAME OVER THE RADIO...

WELL DONE, CAPTAIN — THERE'S A RECEPTION COMMITTEE WAITING FOR YOU!

ZERO X

TOUCHDOWN—AND THE CAPTAIN'S STEPS WERE RAPID AS HE APPROACHED THE GENERAL'S OFFICE...

AH, SORRY ABOUT THIS MISHAP AND THE WAY YOU'VE BEEN TREATED...

YOU WON'T STOP ME EXPOSING YOU, GENERAL. I'M GOING STRAIGHT BACK TO SEE THE PRESIDENT!

A CALM VOICE HALTED PAUL...

THAT **WON'T** BE NECESSARY, CAPTAIN...

MR. **PRESIDENT!**

SLOWLY, PAUL SLUMPED INTO A CHAIR, STAGGERED AND EXHAUSTED...

GENERAL LAKELAND—THE SHAREHOLDING IN TITAN ATOMIC—THEY WERE ALL PART OF A PLAN, CAPTAIN—A PLAN TO TEST **YOUR** REACTIONS.

SORRY YOU'VE BEEN PUT THROUGH THIS, CAPTAIN. BUT WE MUST KNOW HOW MUCH YOU ASTRONAUTS CAN STAND...

WE TIMED THE DETONATION OF ZERO **Z**— AND EVERYTHING ELSE— FROM HERE! YOUR RE-ACTIONS GAVE US VITAL INFORMATION IN THE EVENT OF A SIMILAR, **REAL** EMERGENCY!

AND I CAN TELL YOU THIS, CAPTAIN—YOU ALL PASSED WITH FLYING COLOURS...

CAPTAIN TRAVERS, ARE YOU LISTENING?

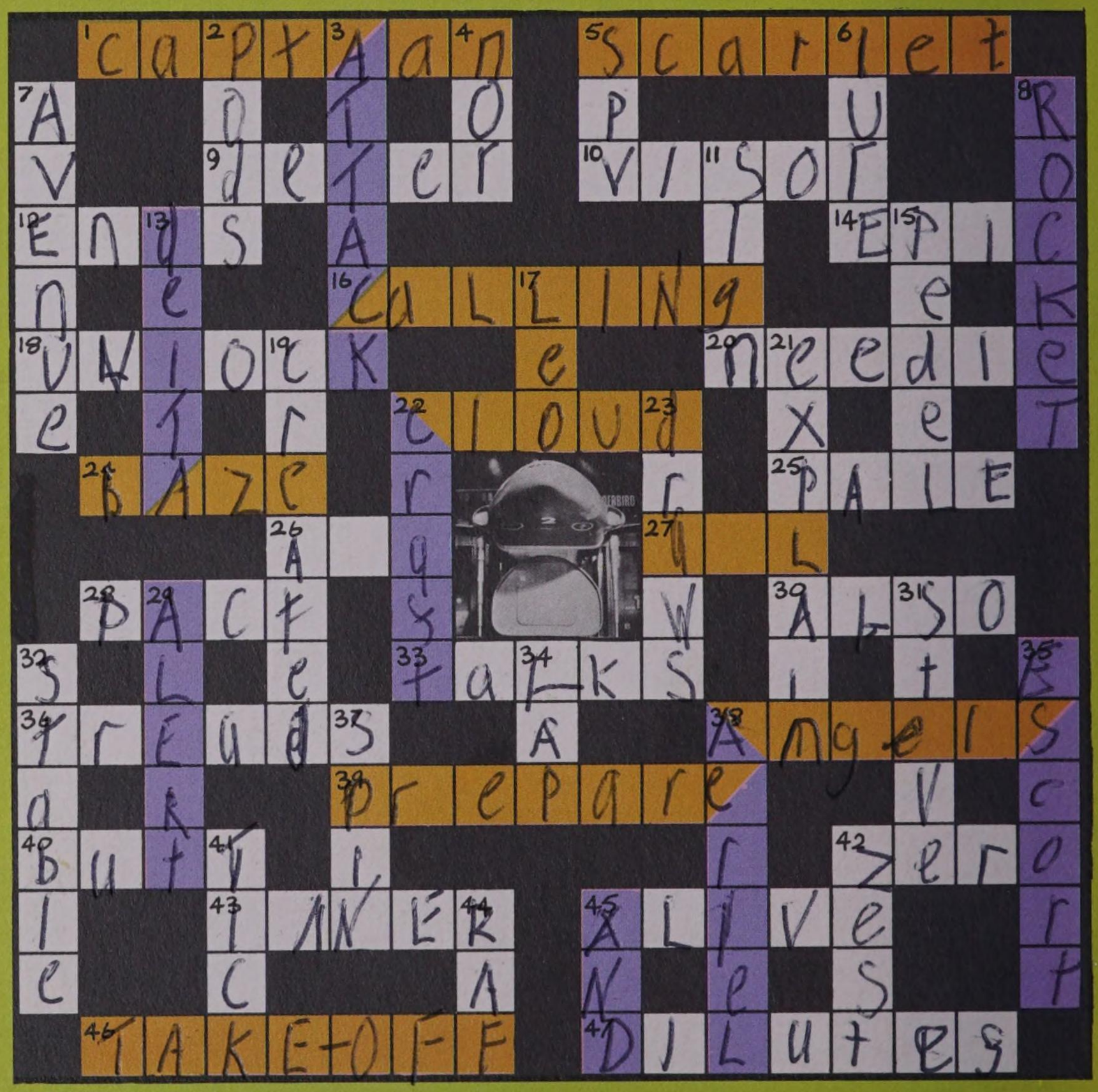
BUT THE ORDEAL OF THE PAST FEW HOURS, HAD FINALLY TAKEN ITS TOLL. CAPTAIN PAUL TRAVERS SLEPT LIKE A BABY!

CROSSCODE

Would YOU make a good secret agent? This crossword will help you find out . . .

Of course, all agents must know how to encode and decode messages. To test your initiative and knowledge, we have encoded two urgent radio calls. You can discover what they are by completing the crossword and then reading, firstly, the words coloured in orange and then those in mauve.

Time yourself and then turn to page 80 for the answers and 'Time-gauge'. But, remember, one mistake and the vital radio messages could be incorrect!



Clues Across

1. Master of a ship (7)
5. Brilliant red colour (7)
9. Discourage (5)
10. Transparent part of spaceman's helmet (5)
12. Finishes (4)
14. Film about historical heroes (4)
16. Hailing (7)
18. Open with a key (6)
20. Pointer on an instrument panel (6)
22. Mass of visible water vapour in the sky (5)
24. Centre of an organization (4)
25. Colourless (4)
26. Atomic Development Authority (3)
27. Everyone (3)
28. Agreement between two nations (4)
30. Too (4)
33. Speaks (5)
36. Walks (6)
38. Harmony is one of these (6)
39. Make ready (7)
40. Barrel for collecting rainwater (4)
42. Nil (4)
43. Interior or —— part (5)
45. Living (5)
46. Point at which rocket leaves the Earth (4–3)
47. Waters down (7)

Down

2. Sections carried by Thunderbird Two (4)
3. An army might do this (6)
4. Neither one —— the other (3)
5. Spectrum Pursuit Vehicle (3)
6. Entice into a trap (4)
7. Road bordered by trees (6)
8. Spacecraft (6)
11. A mark (4)
13. Greek letter (5)
15. Part of a bicycle (5)
17. Fifth sign of the zodiac (3)
19. Is brought into existence (7)
21. Make clear (7)
22. Skill (5)
23. Illustrates (5)
29. Warn (5)
31. —— Zodiac, pilot of Fireball XL5 (5)
32. Building for horses (6)
34. One circuit of a race-track (3)
35. Body of armed men acting as guard to someone (6)
37. Revolve quickly (4)
38. Wire for receiving radio signals (6)
41. Time-bombs do this (4)
42. Enthusiasm (4)
44. Royal Air Force (3)
45. 'Dan' connects words or phrases (3 ANAGRAM)

GERRY ANDERSON'S

THUNDERBIRDS

The fast hydrofoil cargo-liner raced across the Pacific from Honolulu to the Philippines, on course at eighty knots. Small, compact, streamlined, it skimmed the surface, the roar of its engines surging over its creaming wake.

There was no hint of danger. But, suddenly, from out of the depths, shot something so monstrous, so terrible, that the small crew in the cockpit barely had time to see it.

It emerged with the speed of a flying fish, but its size was so great that only its awesome forepart was glimpsed. It smashed against the hydrofoil, hurling it over at speed.

Huge waving tentacles clutched the craft. Great teeth clashed like the jaws of a steel grab as the monster gripped the hydrofoil, smashing it again and again on the churned surface of the sea. Flung around helplessly in the craft's cockpit, the men were dazed and bruised.

They did not know their fate as the battered hydrofoil sank into the depths of the Pacific Ocean. It was over in seconds; instant disaster . . . no survivors . . . no time even to send out a despairing radio call.

Next moment, the monster, too, disappeared into the ocean depths from which it had come . . .

It was too early yet for shipping officials in Manila to wonder why they had no radio report from the craft.

But two days later the fifty-thousand ton, nuclear-powered liner 'Samoa Star' was slicing through the sea in the same area, at fifty knots, *en route* for the East Indies.

Suddenly the water boiled on her port side. Mighty pressure forced up by some unseen creature moving with projectile-like speed hurled a great wave over the ship's side, swamping sun-deck loungers.

The monstrous shape shot out of the sea and crashed against the ship. Huge tentacles slithered and sucked to get a grip.

But, this time, the ship's sleek, smooth lines saved it. The tentacles slid, the 'Samoa Star' tilted dangerously, swerved off course and raced on, and the creature fell back into the sea amid a flurry of foam.

But dozens of people—passengers, crew, officers on the bridge—paralysed with fear, had glimpsed the monstrous shape. As the liner cut away at full speed its radio chattered out the news of the weird sighting.

Shuddering passengers talked. "Heck, did you *see* that?"

"It... its head was like a shark's—but the size . . . And did you see those teeth?"

"But its tentacles—thicker than ship's cables . . . "

Now doubts about the silence of the hydrofoil were felt. The Pacific Naval Patrol was alerted and ships and aircraft raced to the spot.

Concentrating in the deep-water area round the only landmark, Makku Rock—the top of a sunken volcanic peak jutting, lonely and uninhabited, from the vast ocean—the fleet searched.

Under the admiral's orders, engines fell silent and the ships floated noiselessly as sonars sought the undersea presence. *Something* was picked up, something huge, weaving and prowling far below. Tense crews waited ready for action, but the beast showed cunning as well as its proved ferocity.

The admiral decided on an underwater search. A volunteer crew in a four-man submarine, armed with high-powered torpedoes, slid down the ramp from the mother-ship and slipped into the depths—and it was at that moment that the tracking-down of the monster became an operation for Jeff Tracy and the dedicated men of *International Rescue* who flew the famous *Thunderbird* craft!

John Tracy in Thunderbird Five—orbiting high above the Earth—had already collated all known information and all messages about the measures taken to find the monster.

In their comfortable lounge on Tracy Island, in the Pacific, Jeff Tracy and his four other sons and Brains, watched the video screen as John reported grimly.

"My guess," he said from his far-distant position in the sky, "is that if the monster does appear, it will crush the sub in seconds—unless those Navy boys get in an attack first. Even then we don't know what effect—if any—the torpedoes will have on the thing. I reckon Thunderbirds must go!"

"Agreed, John," said Jeff Tracy quietly. "We'll take the necessary measures." International Rescue's grey-haired leader turned to his eldest son. "Scott, take a close look at the area in Thunderbird One. Action now!"

Scott nodded. "I'm on my way, Dad!"

He went to the swinging-wall section which led him to Thunderbird One, waiting at the top of its ramp. In seconds the sleek craft was blasting off from the retracted swimming pool to soar over the securely guarded island at incredible speed.

Jeff Tracy glanced at Brains. "The Navy took a chance in sending that sub down. Any ideas if it gets into trouble, Brains?"

International Rescue's scientific genius was looking at a large wall-chart of the Pacific and Makku Rock area.

"M'mm, if Makku Rock were on land," he said quietly, "it would tower twenty thousand feet. That . . . er . . . gives some idea of the depth of the undersea trench. I would . . . um . . . hazard that this monster is some strange mutation caused by the dumping of atomic waste in this part of the ocean. I . . . er . . . suggest that Thunderbird Two takes me—and my new undersea craft—to the area. It will be an ideal opportunity to test its capabilities."

"You mean that thing you call the *Crab*?" exclaimed Gordon. "But, hey, Brains, this is a job for Thunderbird Four. It's my . . . "

"Brains?" Jeff interrupted, glancing questioningly at the bespectacled scientist.

"In ordinary circumstances, I would agree. My plan, however, is to . . . er . . . go down first in the Crab. Gordon will follow to cover me."

"Okay," sighed Gordon. "You're the genius!"

"Right!" snapped Jeff Tracy. "Virgil, take Brains and the Crab to Makku Rock and return immediately to pod-up Thunderbird Four. No time to waste. Get to it!"

Moments later, Thunderbird Two, with Brains' latest invention secure in its pod, blasted off from the ramp. The great craft set course at 5,000 m.p.h. for the Makku Rock area.

Even at that moment, the four-man crew of the Naval submarine spotted something. Warily, tensely, watching their instruments and detectors, they had been seeking the prowling monster which somebody had already named the 'sharkopus'. It was a game of stealth and cunning. But as the sub's powerful lights stabbed through the underwater darkness, a tense voice alerted the rest of the crew.

"I've got it!" snapped the sonar operator. "It's near . . . look out—full astern! Quick or . . ."

The warning came too late. The monster mutation lanced in at tremendous speed. Great teeth clashed near the bows. Tentacles wrapped in a strangling grip, one closing around the propeller, to be caught and held as the craft stopped with a grinding jerk.

The monster weaved and lashed, throwing the submarine about as easily as if it had been a toy. Inside, the men—bruised and stunned—groped for hand-holds.

Strapped to his seat, the radio operator continued to emit a distress call to the command-ship operator, far above, on the surface.

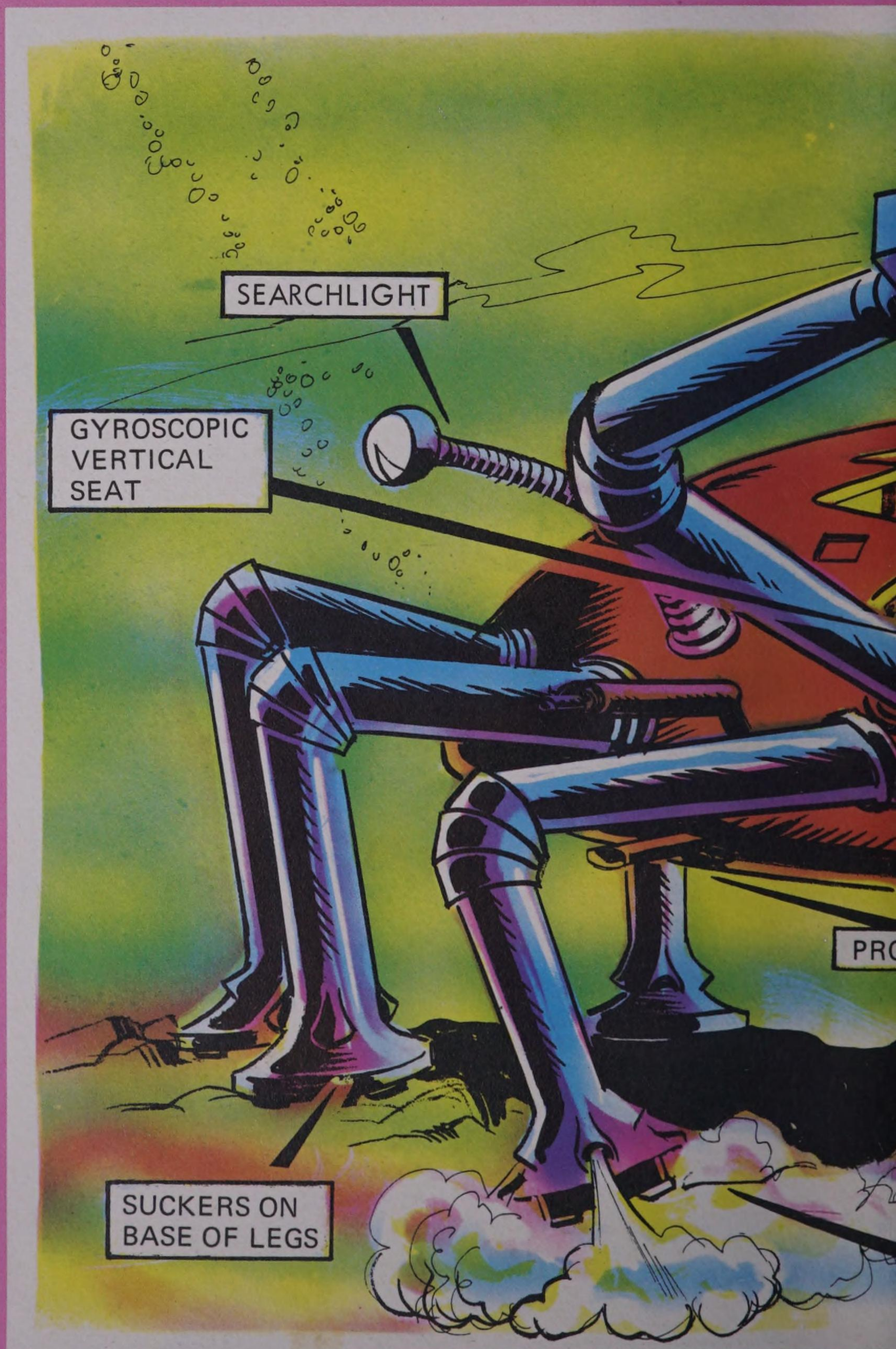
"Sub trapped. The monster's got it!" the second man reported in turn.

At that moment, the sharkopus hurtled towards a towering underwater cliff, ready to smash the irksome submarine against it, in the hope of freeing its ensnared tentacle. But the nose of the craft jammed tightly in a small fissure. Metal grated and held as the monster lashed and tore fruitlessly.

The walls of the submarine shuddered visibly. Once again the radio operator sent out a desperate plea for help—his voice faint and hoarse.

"Jammed in cleft—lights smashed! Creature still attached . . ."

This was the message received by



Virgil and Brains as Thunderbird Two settled on a plateau on Makku Rock —washed by the waves of the Pacific— and lowered its pod. The pod opened and out crawled Brains' newest and most startling creation—the Crab.

A gleaming metal ovoid body, with five pairs of articulated steel legs, it scuttled like the creature it had been based upon towards the sea. Immensely strong in construction, it had supple-metal 'eye-stalks' housing its powerful lights which could turn in any direction.

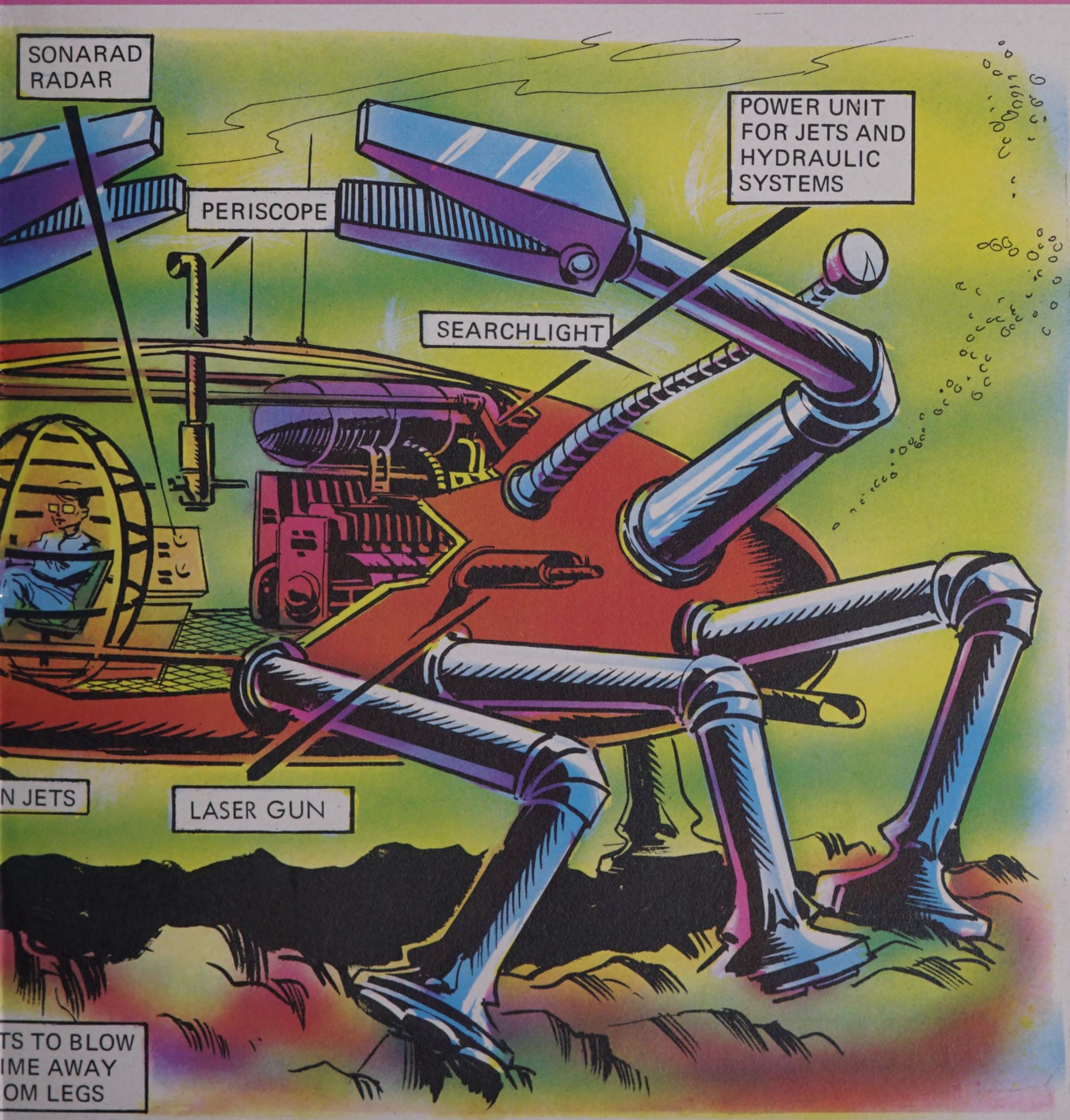
Inside the control cabin, Brains sat calmly in a seat mounted on pivoted rings—like the gimbals of a compass —which would keep him upright no matter what attitude the strange machine took up below the surface.

"Am starting to submerge, Virgil," Brains reported. "There is not much time if we hope to get those men out alive. It is . . . er . . . okay for you to return and collect Gordon . . ."

"On my way, Brains," Virgil replied tensely, depressing controls. "I've a feeling you may need Thunderbird Four!"

Below the plateau, Brains found deep water. As he set his course, jets around the body of the Crab enabled it to shoot along at an incredible speed, towards a high ridge looming ahead, illuminated by the lights on the eye-stalks.

Next moment, the weird craft slowed



beside the steeply sloping ridge and the floor tilted as suction pads, set on the extremities of the great steel legs, gripped on the slimy, weed-encrusted surface. Then the Crab started to climb.

Topping the ridge, it traversed another deep valley, until a second vast wall of rock and weed loomed ahead.

Brains steered close to the wall. The Crab tilted sideways, and, suckers gripping, it crawled along the sheer precipice of what had been, centuries before, a towering volcanic peak.

His 'Sonarad' screen was already relaying a picture of the monster to him. Seconds later, he saw its entire, fearsome length as the lancing lights picked it up.

"Astounding," Brains muttered. "I should like the opportunity to study it in detail."

Even the cool-minded, practical Brains was awed by the size of the monster. It dwarfed the submarine, which he could just see jammed in the cleft. The Crab rocked only slightly as the great body lashed around, causing a turmoil in the depths.

Circling above the area, Scott Tracy in Thunderbird One had already warned the Naval vessels to take new stations farther out in a cordon, ready to attack if the monster was driven to the surface. Now he heard Brains' message.

"Scott, I have found the sharkopus. Have you any news of Thunderbird Two? I shall . . . er . . . need Gordon and Thunderbird Four."

"Scott speaking, Brains. Virgil is in contact. He is nearing Makku Rock with Thunderbird Four podded. Any instructions?"

Brains' voice came faintly from the far depths on the transceiver.

"Um . . . yes, Scott. It will be a delicate operation to detach the . . . er . . . sharkopus from the submarine without damaging the craft. I reckon I can manage it—but I shall have to divert the monster. Gordon may have to undertake the actual rescue. Understood?"

"Roger, Brains, and good luck!"

Scott saw Thunderbird Two enlarge in the sky and drop down above the surface of the water. He watched as, seconds later, the yellow shape of Thunderbird Four slipped from its pod and plunged into the ocean.

Gordon kept Thunderbird Four just beneath the surface until he homed on to Brains' signals and dived almost vertically at high speed. The small but powerful undersea craft cut swiftly through the ever-darkening water. Gordon's face was grim and tense. Thunderbird Four was specially constructed for ultra-deep diving, but what about the hull of the submarine? Just how long would it stand up to the pounding of both water *and* monster?

"I am about to detach the creature," came Brains' calm voice over the radio. "Then it's . . . um . . . over to you, Gordon!"

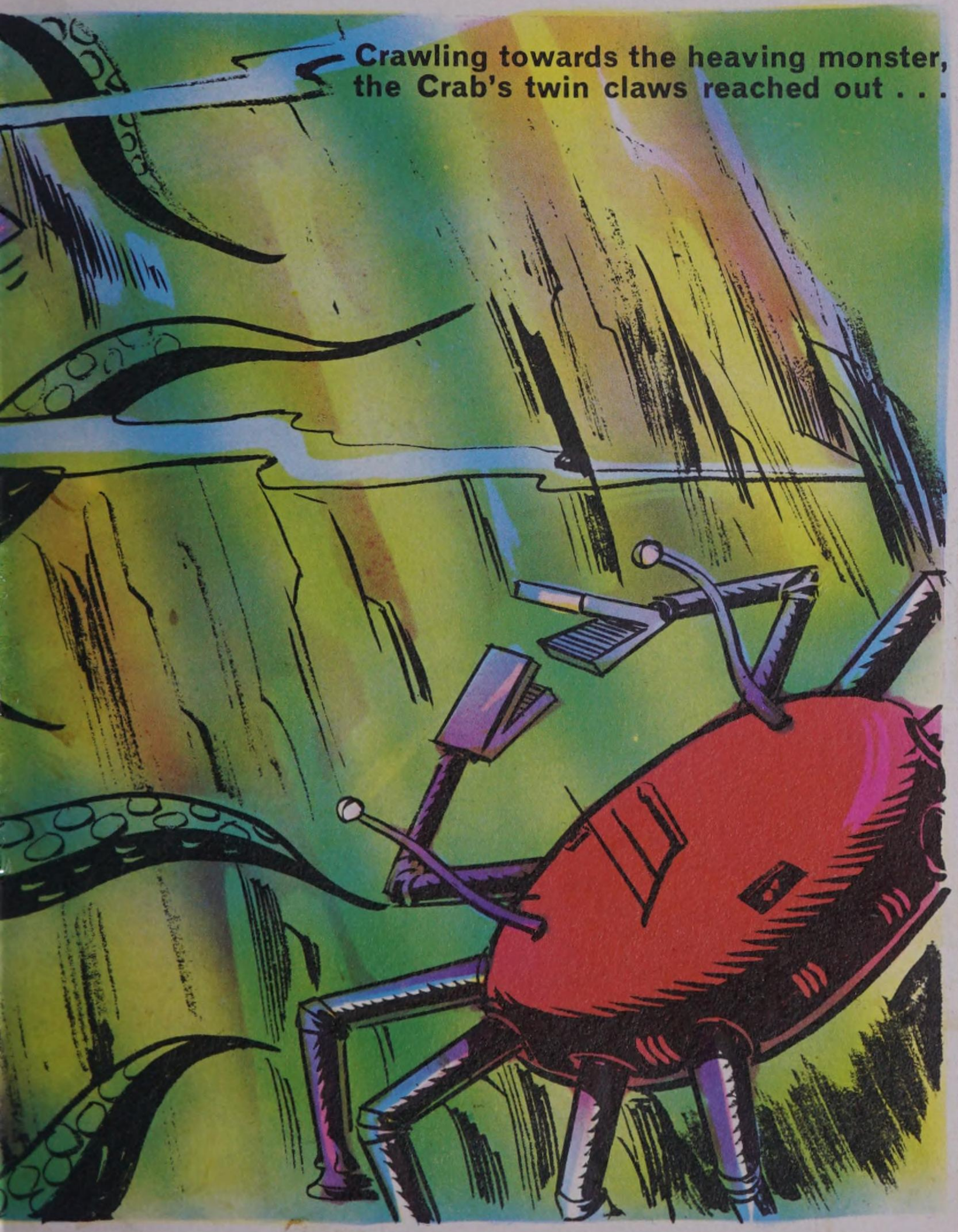
"Watch yourself in that Crab affair of yours," Gordon replied a little anxiously. Brains never failed in his inventive genius. But this craft was something new—as yet untried . . .

The Crab swam closer to the rock wall. Then its suckers gripped and it crawled towards the heaving monster. Brains could see the baleful, malevolent eyes, the huge gash of a mouth with its triangular, murderous teeth. He saw the tentacles wrapped round the submarine, which remained caught in the cleft. But, above all, he concentrated on the single tentacle that had become trapped in the propeller.

Target number one, he decided. With the flick of a switch the twin claws of the Crab reached out. Electronic force surged from them as they clamped on to the writhing tentacle. The monster jerked throughout its length, tail lashing. Next moment, amid a flurry of surging water, the tentacle waved free. A burst of sizzling light from the laser guns, beneath the

Crab's eye-stalks, and the other tentacles swiftly retracted, leaving the submarine clear.

To Brains' relief, the nose of the submarine stayed jammed in the cleft. The monster, rippling along its length, backed away, pushing feebly at the rock with its extended tentacles. For a moment its eyes turned towards the lights of the Crab, and Brains thought



Crawling towards the heaving monster, the Crab's twin claws reached out . . .

it was about to attack. But it swerved away with a sinuous movement and, gathering speed, shot off into the gloom.

Brains had been prepared to use explosive weapons as a last resort. But he was relieved to see the sharkopus fleeing. Soon it was lost to visual contact. But his Sonarad kept him in touch with its image on the screen and the Crab's jets came into operation to propel the craft swiftly in pursuit.

Even at that moment, Thunderbird Four approached the submarine. Powerful lights from the yellow hull focused on to the trapped vessel. Gordon extended hydraulic grabs which fastened on the submarine, and he slammed Thunderbird Four hard into reverse. The murky water seethed violently. Then gradually, with a screeching of metal, the submarine was pulled clear, its crew alive and safe.

Meanwhile, Brains was playing a game of hide-and-seek among the reefs, ridges and underwater caverns with his giant quarry. Only the Crab's incredible manœuvrability enabled it to keep up with the fleeting mutation.

But now the first shocks had worn off. The creature was gathering strength and ferocity once more. Suddenly, it turned and shot towards the Crab, its great jaws open . . . Brains took instant evasive action. The Crab shot sideways and the clamp-like teeth snapped together uselessly.

Once again, electronic force flashed through the water as Brains brought the Crab in to attack, intending to drive the sharkopus to the surface. But it fled, heading for a huge cavern entrance, illuminated by the craft's dazzling lights.

Then a radio call told Brains that Gordon was near.

"The sub's safe—hoisted aboard the mother-ship. Crew should be okay!" Gordon's voice sounded metallically. "Going in to finish it, Brains?"

"I . . . er . . . would rather like to *capture* it," Brains replied coolly. "Such a specimen would make fine scientific study. Don't come too close. The Crab is better equipped to deal with it!"

"Huh?" Gordon grinned uncertainly. "Well, rather you than me, Brains. I sure hope you know what you're doing. But I'm standing by—in case you need help!"

Gordon watched, his own craft's lights augmenting the brilliant glare from the Crab. He saw the sharkopus turn at bay in the cavern. Then, seeming to make up its mind, it lunged out—*to attack!*

Explosive missiles ejected from the Crab; Brains intended to hit the cavern's rock ceiling and cause a fall to stun the creature. But the threshing water tossed the missiles fractionally off-target to burst against the upper edge of the entrance and, suddenly, all was obscured. Age-old rock cascaded in an avalanche and the Crab darted backwards. Thunderbird Four also swerved, heading for safety. When the swirling mist of slime and vegetation had cleared, they saw that the cavern entrance had vanished. It was sealed by hundreds of tons of rock and, inside it, the sharkopus was trapped. Or was it dead? Was there another exit to the cavern?

Would it surface again, some time, to terrorize and destroy?

Brains was strangely regretful as the Crab crawled out of the sea in the shadow of the waiting Thunderbird Two. Next moment, Thunderbird Four's yellow shape floated to the surface nearby. Already, the notified Naval vessels were thankfully turning to base.

"A . . . er . . . great pity," Brains remarked as he sat back sighing in his seat. "I was . . . um . . . a bit too hasty in using explosive weapons!"

"Well, in my book," came Gordon's cheerful tones, "I'm glad the thing's sealed up—and dead, too, I hope!"

"Of course," said Brains thoughtfully as he climbed out of the Crab to look across the sunlit ocean, "there may be other strange forms of mutation in the Makku trench. It may well repay further exploration!"

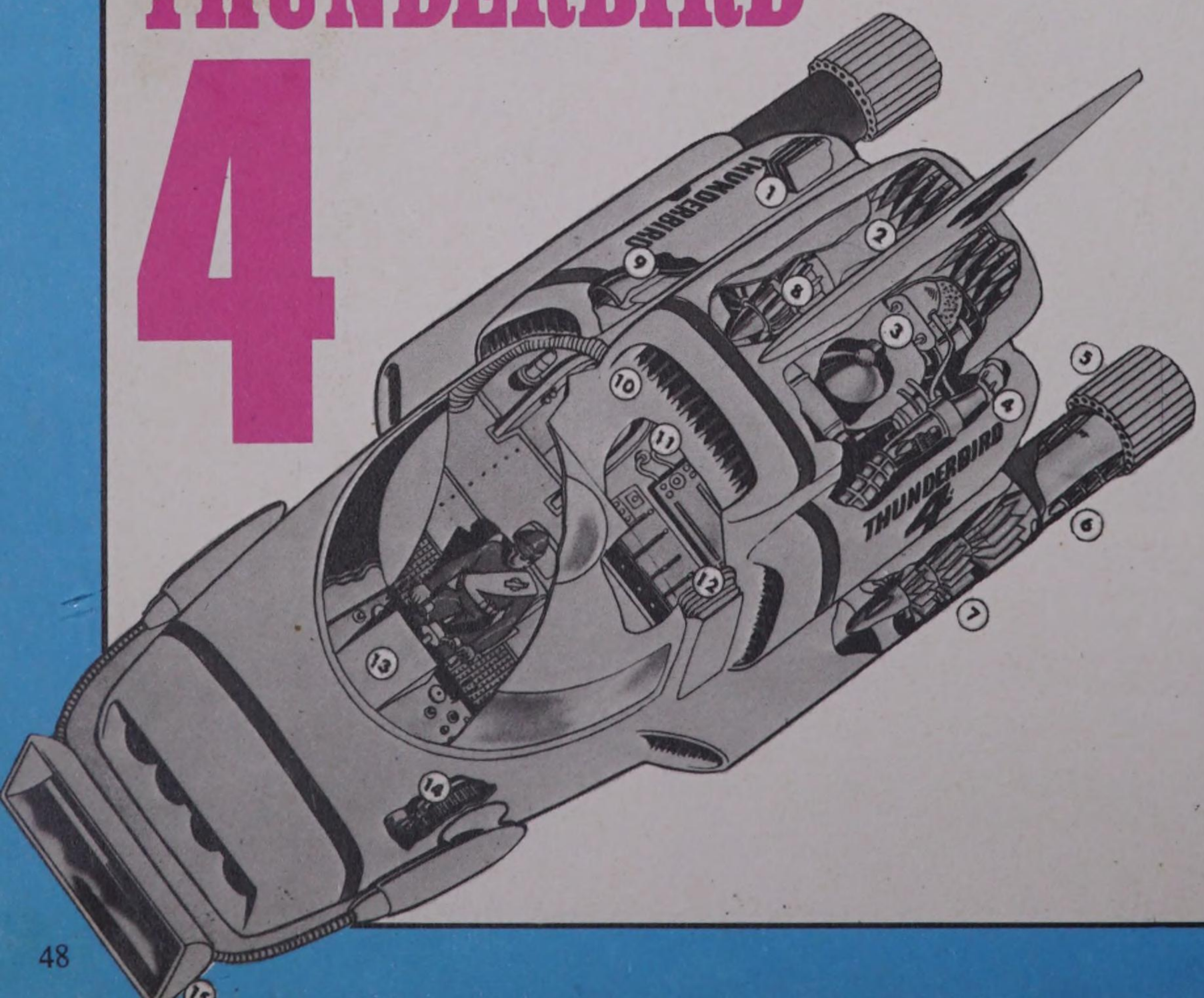
"Have a holiday trip some time then, Brains," chuckled Scott from the circling Thunderbird One. "For my part, I'll stay away from this area—unless there's a job for International Rescue!"

"An idea, Scott," said Brains equably. "I am well satisfied with the performance and capabilities of the Crab. It has limitless possibilities for underwater rescue and exploration. *Virgil, take Gordon back first—I would like to enjoy this peaceful sunshine before I return!*"

"Have a ball, Brains," said Virgil, as Thunderbird One's roar already diminished in the sky. "Come on, Gordon! Let's leave the genius to his solitude!"

Thunderbird Four's yellow shape floated to the surface . . .

THUNDERBIRD 4



KEY

1 Steering vanes in side nacelles control diving and surfacing.
2 Vanes in top nacelle work as rudder.
3 Twin atomic generators provide motive power for main drive. 'Mini-pile' at rear works auxiliaries and superheats air for 4.
4 Small jet engines, port and starboard, normally watertight sealed, used for surface cruising.
5 Battery of rocket tubes used to launch TB4.
6 Boosters.
7 Main turbo drive.
8 One of six drive turbos used when submerged. These nacelles can be sealed, pumped dry and used as flotation chambers in emergency.
9 Intake for surface jets—retracts when not in use.
10 Grille systems filter intake to prevent damage to turbines.
11 Auxiliary controls mounted on rear bulkhead.
12 Telescopic 'Autolock' provides underwater exit.
13 Console.
14 Mechanism controlling position of lighting trough.
15 Lighting trough.

ON THE WAY BACK, I'LL DRIVE!

USA

HI! GRIMLEY! THE CHIEF PARTICULARLY SAID LEAVE THE LOCAL GIRLS ALONE!

HARD LUCK, ARSENAL'S PLAYING AWAY, BUT IF YOU FANCY A LOOK AT FULHAM...

FUNDERBIRDS

IF PALEFACE THINK HIM GOING TO TAKE **THIS** LAND FROM RED MAN, HIM GOT ANOTHER THINK COMING.

USA

BUT, MILDRED, PERHAPS THEY DON'T HAVE CHINESE RESTAURANTS!

YOU ARE HERE

US 13

QUITE HONESTLY, I EXPECTED IT TO BE BIGGER THAN THIS.

SECRET AGENT 21

THE MIRAGE-MAKERS

TRAVELLING TOY SALESMAN BRENT CLEEVER WAS REALLY AGENT 21 OF THE FAMED UNIVERSAL SECRET SERVICE. WITH KINGDOM, HIS UNCANNILY LIFE-LIKE ROBOT DOG, HE ARRIVED AT KELHAVEN DOCKS IN REPLY TO A CERTAIN WARNING FROM THE WORLD GOVERNMENT...

JUMP OUT, OLD SON! AN UNESCORTED GOLD SHIPMENT IS BEING BROUGHT IN. WE'RE TOLD TO BE AROUND IN CASE THINGS GO AMISS.

FULL SECURITY WAS IN FORCE AT THE HARBOUR...

I CAN'T SEE WHAT CAN POSSIBLY GO WRONG. THE SHIPMENT IS SECRET AND THERE ARE ENOUGH PRECAUTIONS HERE TO STOP AN ARMY.

AN ORDINARY FREIGHTER APPROACHED THE HARBOUR ENTRANCE...

THIS ISN'T THE 'GOLD' SHIP! WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT ANOTHER TWENTY MINUTES FOR THAT.

SOMETHING STRANGE WAS HAPPENING ABOARD THE FREIGHTER...

SIR, THE HARBOUR'S VANISHED! I COULD HAVE SWORN WE WERE APPROACHING IT.

KEEP GOING — HALF SPEED AHEAD! CHECK ALL INSTRUMENTS.

CRIES OF HORROR BURST FROM ONLOOKERS...

GREAT GRIEF, WHAT'S HAPPENING?

THEY'LL RAM THE BOOM!

THE FREIGHTER'S MISSED THE HARBOUR ENTRANCE!

WHILE EVERYONE RACED TO SAFETY...

CRAAAAACK!

LOOK OUT!

THE PILOT AND CAPTAIN MUST BE OUT OF THEIR MINDS!

FULL ATTENTION WAS TURNED TO THE CRASH...

EMERGENCY! SUMMON ALL SERVICES!

WATCH OUT FOR AN EXPLOSION!

MEANWHILE...

JUMP, KINGDOM—WE'RE TAKING THE PILOT'S LAUNCH! I'M WONDERING WHAT'S HAPPENED *SOMEWHERE ELSE!*

WE'RE GOING TO MEET THE 'GOLD' SHIP. THE HARBOUR ACCIDENT COULD BE A ***DECOY!***

THE GOLD SHIP WAS SIGHTED...

IT'S AGROUND! THERE SEEMS NO SIGN OF LIFE!

WHEN BRENT BOARDED...

THIS EXPLAINS IT! THE HOLD'S OPEN—AND THE GOLD'S *MISSING!* NOW TO MAKE USE OF YOUR ELECTRONIC SENSES, KINGDOM...

A LIGHT ON THE COLLAR OF THE ROBOT DOG FLASHED...

THE MEN ARE DRUGGED— UNCONSCIOUS. THE LIGHT TELLS ME A SPECIAL GAS WAS USED. THEY WON'T COME ROUND FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS.

SUDDENLY KINGDOM SPRANG OVERBOARD...

HE'S SCENTED SOMETHING. HE WANTS ME TO FOLLOW. KINGDOM HAS POWER-JETS FOR MAKING ANY LEAP.

BRENT TOOK THE HYDROPLANE ASHORE...

WOOOF! WOOOF!

AN ABANDONED VEHICLE! SOMEONE HAD TO LEAVE IT BECAUSE IT BOGGED DOWN. KINGDOM KNOWS IT'S LINKED WITH THE GOLD RAID.

AGENT 21 TOOK A SPECIAL 'TOY' FROM HIS CASE...

AN OLD-FASHIONED TOY WITH A DIFFERENCE. THIS AND A LINE OF CADENIUM THREAD CAN TOW FREE THE VEHICLE FOR USE!

THE STRENGTH OF TOY AND THREAD WAS INCREDIBLE!

IT'S OURS! NOT ONLY CAN WE USE IT BUT KINGDOM CAN TRACE WHERE IT CAME FROM.

BRUUUUUUUMP!

THE 'SCENT' WAS EASILY TRACED...

KEEP IT UP, OLD SON! YOUR MECHANISM CHANGES THE SCENT TO A 'BLEEPER' SIGNAL—AND IT SEEMS TO BE COMING FROM OVER THERE...

BLEEP! BLEEP!

THE SIGNALS CAME AT FULL STRENGTH...

THAT'S BELHAM RESEARCH STATION. WE'LL LEAVE THE ROAD TO AVOID BEING SEEN.

BRENT APPROACHED ON FOOT...

KEEP DOWN, BOY! WE KNOW SOMETHING'S WRONG BUT IT WON'T HELP TO GET OURSELVES KILLED. THE FENCE IS ELECTRIFIED...

ONCE THE GUARDS HAD PASSED...

HE'LL TUNNEL BENEATH THE FENCE. NO REAL DOG COULD DIG AT SUCH SPEED.

THE TUNNEL WAS SWIFTLY MADE...

I'M THROUGH—MAKE FOR COVER, BOY! LEAD ME TO WHERE WE'LL BE SAFE FROM THE GUARDS.

WITHIN THE RESEARCH CENTRE...

GET THE GOLD LOADED! BLAST OFF IN FIVE MINUTES.

ALL THE REAL STAFF ARE STILL UNCONSCIOUS FROM THE GAS.

IT'S LUCKY THAT SCIENTISTS HERE WERE WORKING ON A MACHINE THAT ***BENDS LIGHT RAYS*** TO CAUSE A MIRAGE EFFECT. THAT'S HOW WE MADE THE FREIGHTER CRASH INTO THE HARBOUR WALL.

THE 'GOLD' SHIP HAD BEEN MADE TO RUN AGROUND IN THE SAME MANNER...

THEY WON'T SEE THEY'RE HEADING FOR LAND. THE MIRAGE GUN 'JAMS' ALL INSTRUMENTS AND ALSO SHOWS THEM OPEN SEA AHEAD.

AS THE SHIP GROUNDED, GAS-SHELLS HAD BEEN FIRED...

ON TARGET! EVERY-ONE ABOARD WILL 'BLACK OUT'.

AAAAAAH!

AAAAAH!

BRENT OVERHEARD ENOUGH...

TIME TO GO INTO ACTION. I'VE SOME TOY SOLDIERS THAT REALLY **CAN** FIGHT!

REMOTE-CONTROLLED, SMALL MODELS MOVED FORWARD...

IT'S THE TURN OF SOMEONE ELSE TO BE HARMLESSLY PUT TO SLEEP FOR A WHILE.

SHOCKED RAIDERS TURNED...

WHAT ARE THEY? SOME SORT OF TOYS...!

SMASH THEM! TAKE NO CHANCES!

TINY GUNS DISCHARGED HYPODERMIC DARTS...

AAAGH! IT'S LIKE BEING STUNG.

THEY'RE... ***ALIVE!***

UNCONSCIOUSNESS FOLLOWED ALMOST AT ONCE...

WE'LL SEE TO THE REST, KINGDOM! COME ON!

THE ROBOT DOG WENT INTO ACTION...

DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK, ANYONE! YOUR GAME'S FINISHED!

WE SURRENDER! WHO ARE YOU?

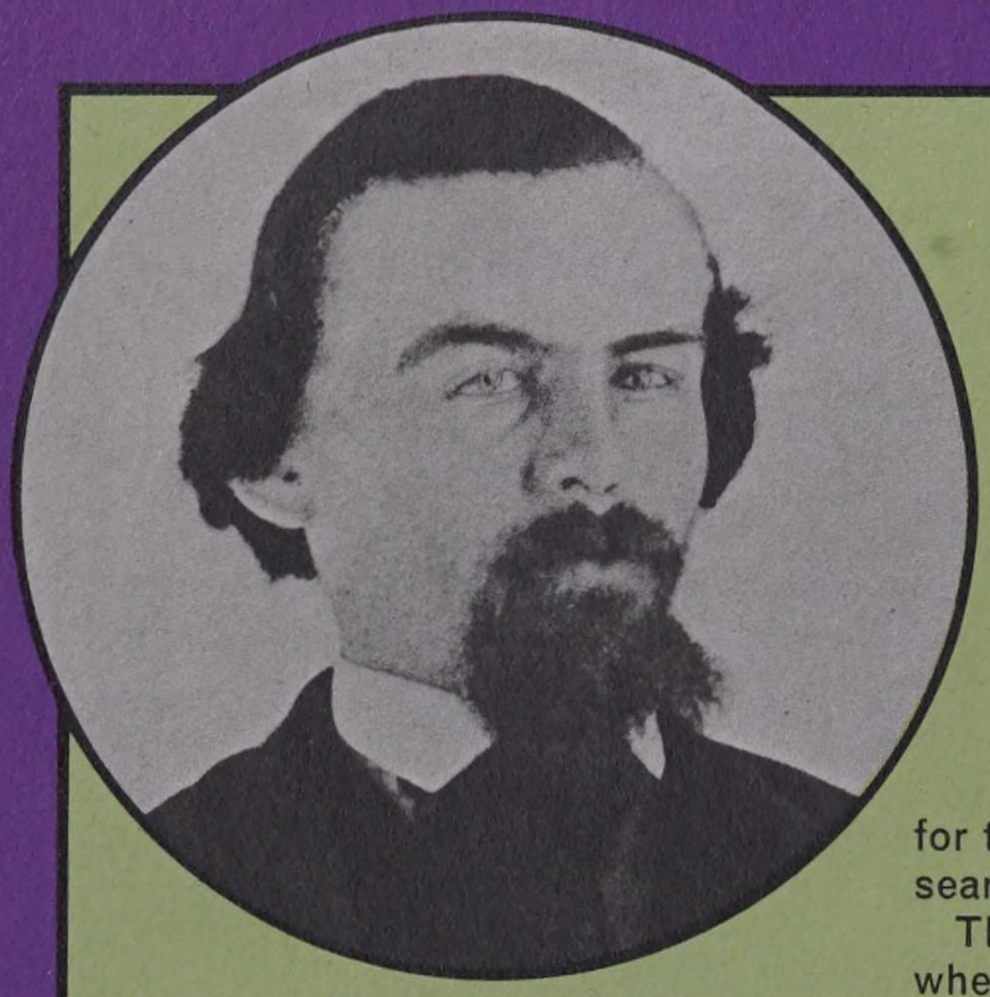
NO ONE **YOU'LL** MEET AGAIN. I'VE ALREADY SIGNALLED FOR SECURITY FORCES TO BE ON THEIR WAY.

BRENT LEFT JUST BEFORE 'SECURITY' TOOK OVER...

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED, OLD SON. THE GOLD AND THE RAIDERS ARE IN SAFE HANDS. I ONLY WISH WE COULD STAY TO SEE HOW THE MIRAGE MACHINE **ACTUALLY WORKED!**

GHOST SHIP

Like a weird sea-phantom, the 'Mary Celeste' drifted aimlessly—a derelict with a sinister secret . . .



Captain Benjamin Spooner Briggs, Master of the 'Mary Celeste'.

Fine spray scattered before the bows of the heavily laden brig. It was almost a month out from New York and its destination—*nowhere!*

For, on board, there was no helmsman to check the freely spinning wheel. It was deserted—the ship's entire complement had disappeared.

Now it reeled drunkenly as it wandered the sea, a ghostly derelict, with only the occasional creak of its rigging to break the eerie silence.

It was a fine afternoon, on 5th December, 1872, when Captain Moorhouse, master of the barque 'Dei Gratia', heard the familiar voice of the lookout from aloft. Following the seaman's pointing arm, he spotted the outline of a brig against the clear horizon. But immediately his suspicions were aroused. It was sailing under its jib and foresail only, though the perfect weather afforded full canvas.

A signal to the mysterious brig merely confirmed his growing uneasiness. There was no reply. Obviously something was very wrong. Turning to his crew, he ordered a small search-party to take a boat and investigate.

As the chosen seamen neared the dark, looming ship they could distinguish the fine insignia embossed on the hull. It was the brigantine's name: the 'Mary Celeste'. Then the mate indicated a set of davits hanging idly. One of the boats was missing.

Silently the hardened sailors clambered aboard. They studied the deserted deck with grim faces. What could possibly have happened to the men who had sailed in her? Preparing for the worst, they began an intensive search.

The foc's'le proved to be empty but when they reached the cabin they stared in amazement through the open door . . .

There, laid out on the table, was an unfinished meal; an egg with the top sliced off as though about to be eaten, a half-emptied plate of porridge and three cups of tea. As they inspected more closely, they looked at each other in utter astonishment. The tea was still *warm!*

Also on the table was an opened bottle of cough-mixture—without a drop having been spilt. This pointed to one thing—the occupants had been struck by a very sudden and violent disaster—and only a short while before!

The immediate thought which came to mind, was that of pirates. But then they had seen no other sail and when they studied the ship's log book, it only added to the mystery. Not a single entry had been made during the past ten days and the last reading had stated as all being well, giving the ship's position as 36 degrees latitude north, 27 degrees longitude west, at that time. In addition the money chest had not been robbed nor two watches which were also found in the cabin. Had pirates really attacked the brig it would seem strange they did not take these. Although compasses were found, there was no sign of the vessel's chronometer or papers—which might have linked with the missing boat.

As the bewildered men scoured the cabin they came across the one sign of life aboard the 'dead' ship. It was a large, black cat, asleep on the locker. But even as they did so, one of the men muttered a surprised cry . . . He had discovered a blood-stained cutlass. This was the first sinister pointer to suggest foul play.

Elsewhere about the cabin, objects indicated the presence of a woman and child; a thimble and cotton-reel, a harmonium with music and books, and a pinafore lay on the table.

Stepping warily now, the boarding-party covered the rest of the ship. In the crew's quarters were still many personal belongings such as pipes and tobacco, and clothes were found hanging up to dry.

Then exchanging puzzled glances, they made their way back to the deck. It seemed that something almost uncanny had befallen the brig—but what—they dared not imagine.

Now a series of new, odd discoveries were made. A deep cut had been hacked in the starboard rail, beside which were some dark stains. One hatch cover was lying upturned, though the cargo remained intact, and on either side of the bows was a narrow, hewn-out slit some six feet deep.

Returning to the 'Dei Gratia' the men outlined their weird story to Captain Moorhouse. Shortly afterwards, the barque arrived at its port-of-call—Gibraltar—towing the ill-fated prize.

After a court inquiry, the 'Mary Celeste' was handed back to her owner, J. H. Winchester, and Moorhouse and his men received £1,700 salvage money.

Records confirmed that in addition to the brig's crew of two mates and five seamen, the ship's master, Benjamin Briggs, had taken along his wife and young daughter. This accounted for the feminine articles within the cabin.

The 'Mary Celeste' had sailed from New York harbour on 7th November, 1872, bound for Genoa with a cargo of 1700 barrels of alcohol. But despite all efforts, no feasible solution could be established as to its speedy abandonment.

Recalling the dark-stained slit in the

A longboat from the 'Dei Gratia' approaches the deserted 'Mary Celeste'.

rail, it was suggested the ship had been attacked by a giant sea creature. But the theory was rejected when the stain was found to be made from wine. And was it possible to consider any beast large enough to engulf the crew and one of the boats?

As the years passed, and still no conclusive evidence was forthcoming, random suggestions continued to pile up. Newspaper reports of actual survivors were printed, famous authors established themselves over the mystery and, eventually, in 1929 an entire volume was written, containing the author's own ideas on the unsolved mystery.

But all proved unable to comply fully with the intricate detail which had been amassed about the case, and the 'survivors' were falsified.

Finally, in 1885, the 'Mary Celeste' was wrecked off the coast of Cuba. Thus, to the present day, the mystery remains a long-sought-after secret. Only the unfortunate crew can be sure what really happened and they, like the 'Mary Celeste', have taken the answer to the grave.

CAPTAIN SCARLET

WAVE OF DESTRUCTION

SOUTH OF JERUSALEM, IN A BARREN, ARID RANGE OF MOUNTAINS, A PARTY OF SIGHTSEERS WAS BEING SHOWN ROUND AL KIRBID— A NEWLY-DISCOVERED SITE OF EXTREME ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE. AMONG THE TOURISTS, ENJOYING A RARE HOLIDAY, WAS LIEUTENANT PURPLE, ATTACHED TO SPECTRUM'S MIDDLE EAST SECTOR...

AND OVER THERE, GENTLEMEN, IS 'THE CLAW-SCOOP' - A NEW MACHINE CAPABLE OF DIGGING THROUGH ANY SURFACE, TO UNCOVER ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS!

FASCINATING! AN EXAMPLE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND HISTORY GOING HAND-IN-HAND, EH, PROFESSOR?

WALKING FORWARD TO HAVE A CLOSER LOOK, PURPLE SUDDENLY FROZE...

THE DRIVER - **THAT FACE**! SURELY IT CAN'T BE...?

YES - IT IS! **CAPTAIN BLACK**! THE MYSTERONS' MOST DEADLY AGENT!

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MIND WHIRLING, THE LIEUTENANT WATCHED GRIMLY AS THE CLAW-SCOOP TRUNDLED AWAY...

IT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING - THE MYSTERONS ARE PLANNING ANOTHER ATTACK— IN THIS AREA! I MUST FIND OUT WHAT IT IS...

THAT NIGHT, PURPLE RETURNED ALONE TO AL KIRBID — EVERY NERVE ALERT FOR DANGER...

I'LL TRY AND LOCATE BLACK'S HEADQUARTERS. GET AS MUCH INFORMATION AS I CAN, THEN CONTACT CLOUDBASE!

BUT AS THE SPECTRUM AGENT SLID, SHADOW-LIKE, TOWARDS THE HUTS...

FOOL, PURPLE! I, TOO, RECOGNIZE AN ENEMY WHEN I SEE ONE!

CLUNK

BY COMING HERE THIS AFTERNOON, YOU SIGNED YOUR OWN DEATH WARRANT!

YEEAGH!

ZZZAMPA!

AND SO LIEUTENANT PURPLE DIED — **TO BE INSTANTLY RE-CREATED AS A SERVANT OF THE MYSTERONS...**

MY FRIEND, THERE IS WORK TO DO - AND LITTLE TIME. COME...

I OBEY!

AT DAWN NEXT DAY, ON CLOUDBASE — HEADQUARTERS OF THE SPECTRUM ORGANIZATION — A HIGH-PITCHED WHINE SUDDENLY ECHOED FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS PANEL...

COLONEL WHITE! I'M GETTING A SONIC BLIP ON CHANNEL NINE. *THERE'S A MYSTERON WARNING COMING THROUGH!*

WE THE MYSTERONS WILL RELEASE THE WATERS OF SALT AT NOON TODAY IN GEOGRAPHIC AREA 78!

IN THE CONTROL ROOM...

AREA 78 COVERS THE ENTIRE MIDDLE EAST, COLONEL — BUT WHAT ARE THE 'WATERS OF SALT'?

WE'LL HAVE TO FIND OUT — *FAST!* LAUNCH ALL ANGELS, LIEUTENANT GREEN!

WITHIN MINUTES, THE FIVE STRIKE-AIRCRAFT WERE STREAKING INTO A CLEAR BLUE SKY...

ONCE OVER THE MEDITERRANEAN, THEIR RADAR PROBES BEGAN TO SCAN EVERY MILE OF AREA 78. THEN, SUDDENLY...

BLEEP! BLEEP!

MELODY ANGEL TO CONTROL! AM RECEIVING CODED SIGNAL FROM LIEUTENANT PURPLE, OF SPECTRUM MIDDLE EAST SECTOR!

HIS GROUND POSITION IS TWO-ZERO-ZERO, IN THE ANDRAK HILLS. HE REQUESTS HELP OF CAPTAIN SCARLET IMMEDIATELY, RE. MYSTERON THREAT!

SCARLET SPEAKING, MELODY! I'M ON MY WAY!

ONCE AGAIN, SPECTRUM SWUNG INTO ACTION – AND, IN A COMMAND HELICOPTER, CAPTAIN SCARLET CLOSED QUICKLY ON THE BLEAK, ANDRAK HILLS...

LIEUTENANT PURPLE, EH? ACCORDING TO COMPUTER DATA, HE WAS ON HOLIDAY. SEEMS STRANGE THAT HE SHOULD STUMBLE ON *THIS* PIECE OF ACTION!

AS HE LANDED AT THE GIVEN REFERENCE – AN EERIE, ALMOST SINISTER SILENCE HUNG IN THE AIR...

THIS IS CRAZY! MELODY SAID PURPLE SHOULD BE RIGHT HERE – WAITING FOR ME!

LEERING, PURPLE LEANED OUT OF THE CAB – AND THE WAVE OF DIZZINESS WHICH OVERCAME THE INDESTRUCTIBLE SCARLET MEANT ONLY ONE THING...

UGH! THAT'S PURPLE! SO HE'S BEEN **MYSTERONISED**! HIS SIGNAL WAS A FAKE... TO GET ME OUT OF... THE WAY WHILE THE THREAT WAS CARRIED OUT...

WELCOME TO REFERENCE TWO-ZERO-ZERO, CAPTAIN. COMFORTABLE? *HA,HA,HA!*

THEN, WITH PARALYSING SUDDENNESS, AN ENGINE ROARED INTO LIFE, AND...

ZERUUNK!

AARGH!

...MUST REACH MY BOOT... ONLY CHANCE I HAVE OF BREAKING LOOSE...

HIDDEN INSIDE WAS THE ONLY WEAPON THAT COULD DESTROY A MYSTERON AGENT – AN ELECTRON RAY-GUN...

GRAAH!

KERRUMPF!

WRIGGLING FREE, THE SPECTRUM CAPTAIN SWIFTLY SEARCHED THE DEAD MYSTERON AGENT...

A MAP OF THE MIDDLE EAST – **WITH THE DEAD SEA RINGED IN RED!**

THE MOST FANTASTIC SALT LAKE IN THE WORLD! THAT EXPLAINS THE MYSTERON THREAT, ALL RIGHT. BUT JUST *WHAT* DID THEY MEAN BY *RELEASING* THE WATERS?

IN A DESPERATE RACE AGAINST TIME, SCARLET FLEW EAST – AND AT NOON PRECISELY, OVER THE FLAT, WHITE EXPANSE OF THE DEAD SEA...

BAROOOM!

AN UNDERWATER EXPLOSION! BUT WHAT *PURPOSE* CAN IT SERVE?

HE FOUND OUT, EXACTLY THREE MINUTES LATER...

A HUGE *DRAINAGE* PIPE! THAT CHARGE MUST HAVE BLOWN AN UNDERSEA PLUG – THE COMPLETE LAKE IS BEING PUMPED AWAY THROUGH THE CLIFF-FACE...

OF COURSE, *THAT'S IT!* THE MYSTERONS ARE OUT TO DESTROY THE SHAGRA SUBTERRANEAN GRAIN STORES!

TEN MILES TO THE WEST, THE MASSIVE FOOD STORAGE PLANT LAY BENEATH A FLAT, SCORCHING PLAIN. IMPERVIOUS AGAINST ANY BOMBING ATTACK, IT HAD BEEN BUILT TO KEEP THREE-MILLION UNDER-PRIVILEGED PEOPLE ABOVE STARVATION LEVEL...

FRANTICALLY, SCARLET RACED INTO THE TUNNEL...

BY FEEDING THE EXTRA-SALTY WATERS OF THE DEAD SEA THROUGH THE MAIN VENTILATION SYSTEM INTO THE STORES, MILLIONS OF TONS OF FOOD WILL BE DESTROYED!

BUT AS HE RAN FOR THE MAIN PUMP HOUSE...

ZUMMPF!

CAPTAIN BLACK! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN YOU'D BE BEHIND ALL THIS!

PRECISELY! BY USING THE CLAW-SCOOP OVER A PERIOD OF TIME, MY AGENTS AND I DUG AND LAID AN ENTIRE DRAINAGE SYSTEM THROUGH THIS CLIFF!

IN LESS THAN A DAY, ENOUGH WATER WILL HAVE BEEN PUMPED FROM THE DEAD SEA INTO THE SHAGRA AIR VENTS, TO DESTROY EVERY SACK OF GRAIN!

THE PUMP HOUSE - I MUST DESTROY IT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE. PERHAPS WITH THIS IMPACT BOMB...

SNEERING, BLACK WATCHED CAPTAIN SCARLET LOB THE HEAVY CHARGE INTO THE DUCT-CHANNEL. BUT THEN TO HIS HORROR...

EXPLOSIVES! BUT... THE BOX... IT'S FLOATING... ***AND COMING STRAIGHT AT ME!***

IT WAS A TEN-SECOND FUSE - AND AS THE SPECTRUM AGENT SCRAMBLED CLEAR...

BA-BOOM

THAT METAL BOX CONTAINING THE IMPACT BOMB. WHY DIDN'T BLACK TRY TO STOP YOU THROWING IT?

LATER, ON CLOUDBASE, ONLY ONE QUESTION REMAINED TO BE ANSWERED...

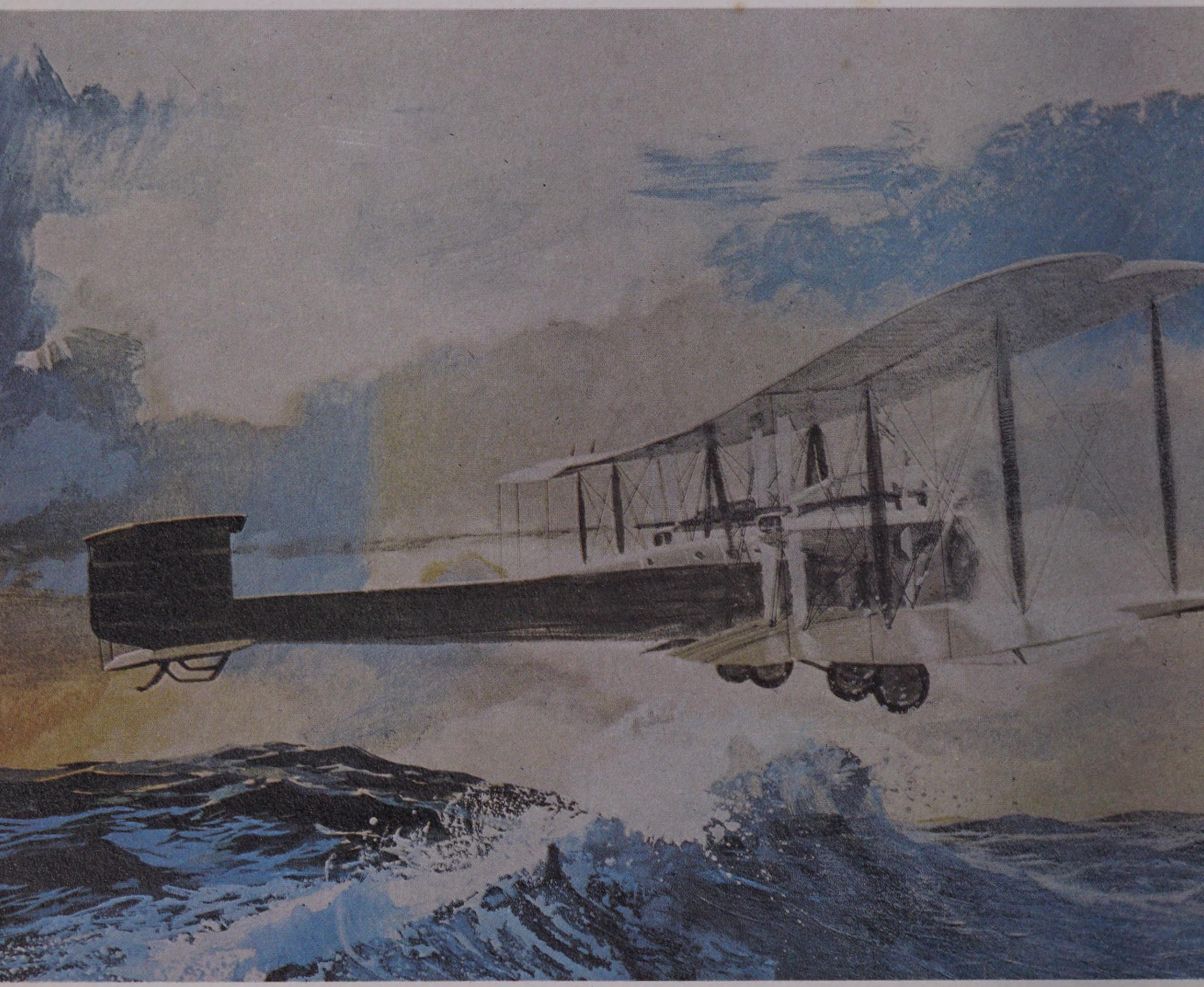
BECAUSE HE EXPECTED IT TO SINK—HE FORGOT THAT THE DEAD SEA IS **EIGHT** TIMES AS BUOYANT AS NORMAL WATER!

I GAMBLED THE BOMB WOULD FLOAT - AND IT PAID OFF!

MINUTES LATER, ONLY TWISTED FRAGMENTS REMAINED OF THE GLEAMING, METAL DRAINAGE-PIPE...

PERHAPS BLACK AND HIS MEN MANAGED TO GET CLEAR—PERHAPS NOT. BUT AT LEAST THE FUTURE OF THREE MILLION PEOPLE IS SAFE, AND THAT'S THE MAIN THING!

WINGS ACROSS



With an echoing roar, the jet engines burst into life. Minutes later, gathering speed, the aircraft hurtled down the runway. Then like a massive, sleek, metal bird, it nosed skywards towards over three thousand miles of unbroken ocean.

Inside the airport's ground-control centre, an operator turned to his superior. "Trans-atlantic flight 375 departed, sir."

Today, flying across the Atlantic is nothing new. In fact, business-men and holiday-makers are doing it all the time. In this fast-moving world it is accepted with in-difference.

But it was not *always* like that . . .

At the turn of the century the thought of flying across the Atlan-tic would have shocked the world. Unthinkable! Impossible! People were still trying to convince them-selves that the Wright Brothers had *really* made the first manned, powered flights in a strange-look-ing machine, in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The date was 17th December, 1903, and the brothers had made aviation history. How-ever, it was only the beginning of a new era—that of the *aeroplane!*

Hardly had people stopped talk-ing of this incredible achievement, when another man's name rose to their lips; that of Louis Blériot. Unbelievable as it seemed, he had

THE ATLANTIC

flown across the English Channel —the first man to do so—to collect a prize of ten thousand pounds put up by Lord Northcliffe, of the 'Daily Mail'. It was the year 1909 and Blériot had flown from Calais to Dover in thirty-seven minutes.

Once again the development of powered flight blazed across the newspapers only to be followed by an announcement by Lord Northcliffe. This time he stated he would give ten thousand pounds for the first non-stop flight across the *Atlantic!*

The doubters rallied again. Yes, the Channel had been flown. But, surely, to attempt a trans-Atlantic flight was sheer madness? After all, there was no plane in existence that could even fly such a distance! Some, however, did take Northcliffe's offer seriously. But before anything further could be done about it, Britain was plunged into the First World War.

Now it became necessary for rapid development of the then very unreliable aircraft. Thus, four years later, in 1918, when victory was being celebrated, pilots also hailed the tremendous improvement of aero-engines.

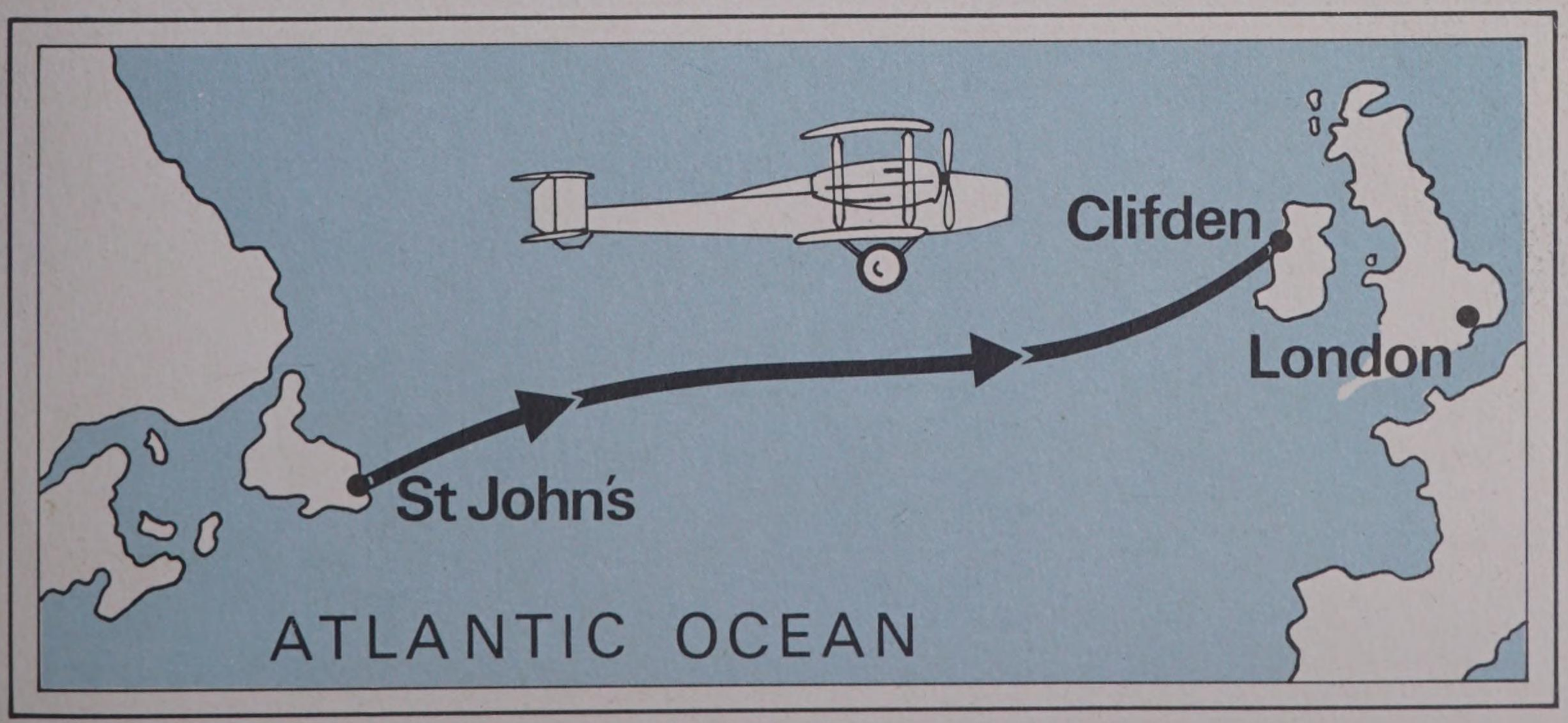
It was in June of the following year that two men turned their thoughts again to the first trans-Atlantic flight. Their names were John Alcock and Arthur Whitten Brown, both experienced pilots. They announced they would accept Northcliffe's challenge. They would make the attempt together; Alcock as pilot and Brown acting navigator. Immediately, work began converting a Vickers Vimy Bomber to hold the massive quantity of fuel. Then the aircraft was sent by sea to Newfoundland, from where they would set out on their historic flight.

Final tests were made. Everything was working perfectly except for slight trouble with the aircraft's radio. Food was put aboard, and finally Alcock and Brown clambered into their seats.

The Vimy was carrying 865 gallons of fuel—overloading it dangerously — and speculation rose as to whether or not the aircraft would even get off the ground safely.

It was a close thing. Its engines straining, the ex-bomber struggled into the sky, narrowly missing nearby woods at the end of the runway. *The race to fly the Atlantic had begun!*

But the flight did not get off to a good start. Brown noticed the radio had suddenly gone dead. So he had to turn his gaze to the stars to navigate. Then an exhaust fault developed in one of the Vimy's 360 h.p. Rolls-Royce 'Eagle' engines. But there was another hazard—seemingly far more dangerous than anything else. The *weather!* Fog closed thickly around the aircraft and it grew so shockingly cold that the airspeed indicator froze and the aircraft's wings kept icing up. But not before the Vimy had stalled and started to plunge towards the blustering waves! To both men, the sound of the engines suddenly coughing to life again was that of a miracle. But they still had to deal with the



The diagram shows the course followed by Alcock and Brown, in their Vimy, from St. John's, Newfoundland to Clifden, Ireland.

ice on the wings. There was only one thing to do, Brown decided. Removing his safety belt, he pulled himself up out of the cockpit and on to the wing! Then gradually he cut away at the ice with his small pocket knife. Courageously he repeated this action several times before the danger was over.

Finally, after just over sixteen hours of non-stop flying, Alcock pointed to land ahead. They had reached the Irish coast. Just a few minutes later, they both spotted people waving frantically. Theirs was certainly some achievement. But, it was not for that reason that the people waved skywards. They were trying to indicate that the landing-point Alcock and Brown had decided upon, was thick mud! But it was too late. Already, the over-worked Vimy was diving earthwards . . .

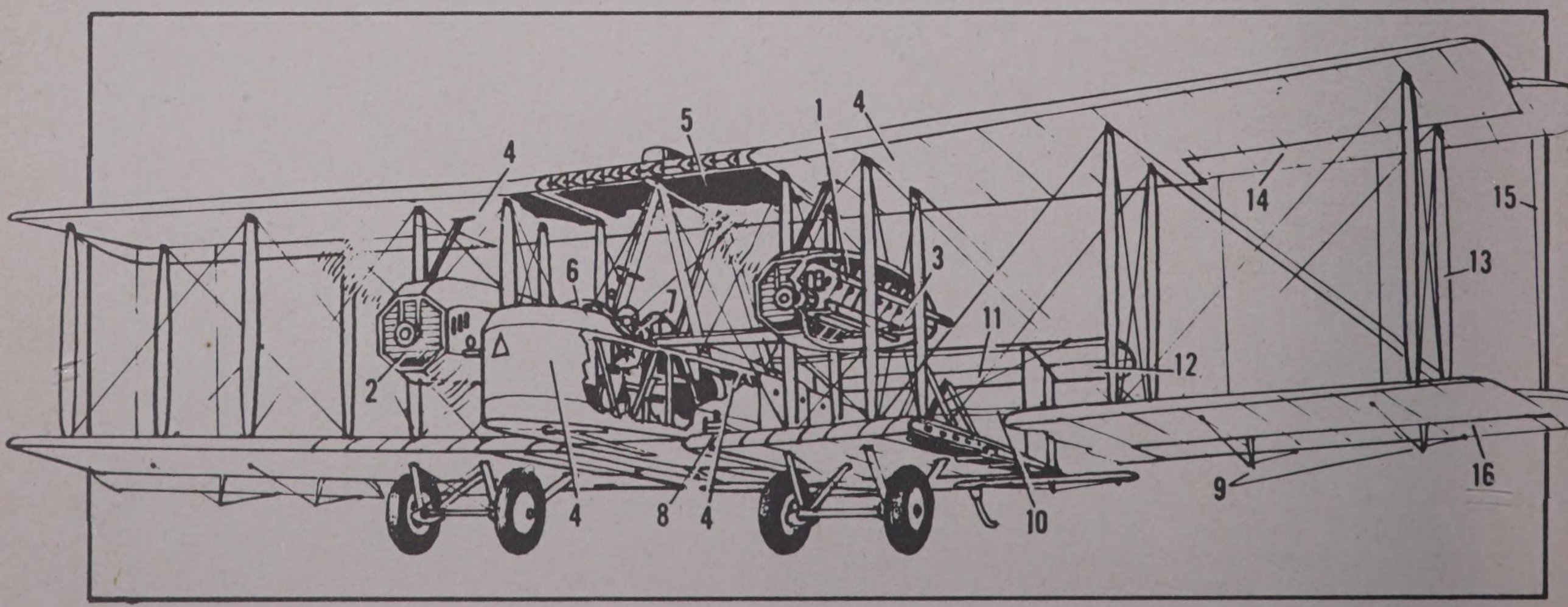
A wave of muddy water sprayed as the aircraft's undercarriage touched down. Then the Vimy halted, its nose in the soft ground. Fortunately, they landed safely, to receive Northcliffe's prize-money.

Amid fabulous celebrations, the world heralded Alcock and Brown as the first men to fly the Atlantic. They had pitted their strength and daring against the might of the ocean for sixteen hours and twelve minutes—and *won!*

VICKERS VIMY

KEY TO PARTS

1. **12 cylinder, 360 h.p. Rolls-Royce engines**
2. **Radiator**
3. **Oil tank**
4. **Petrol tanks**
5. **Main petrol tank**
6. **Pilot, John Alcock**
7. **Navigator, Arthur Whitten Brown's seating position**
8. **Control cables for rudders, elevators and ailerons**
9. **Control cables for lower ailerons**
10. **Control cables for rudders**
11. **Control cables for the elevator**
12. **Elevator**
13. **Struts**
14. **Upper wing aileron**
15. **Connecting cables between upper and lower ailerons**
16. **Lower wing aileron**



Cranky Franky-the nutty newsboy

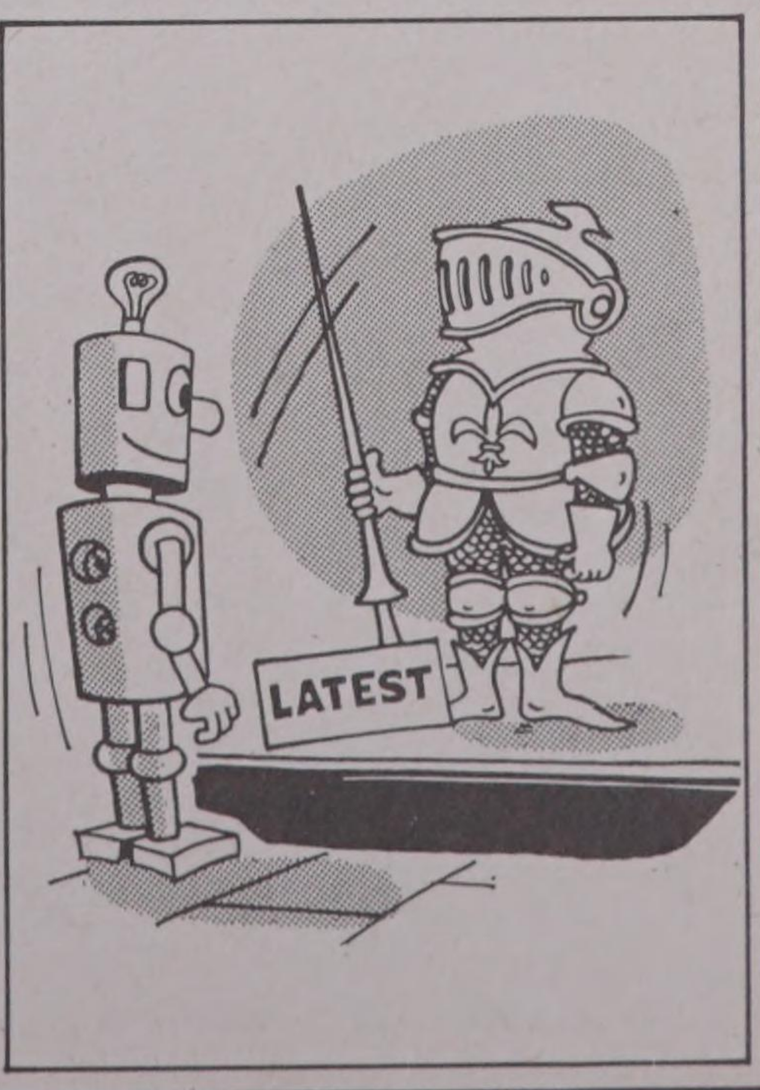
ONE MORNING...
SAY, BOSS! I'VE FOUND JUST THE THING FOR OUR MAGAZINE'S 'GADGET' PAGE!
THE READERS WILL LOVE IT! THERE'S A BOTTLE OPENER, AND...
SORRY, FRANKY, I HAVEN'T TIME TO SEE IT NOW!
ALL RIGHT, BOSS. I'LL LEAVE IT HERE FOR YOU TO LOOK AT!
IF YOU LIKE, BUT I CAN'T SEE WHY! BESIDES, THERE'S NOT A SQUARE INCH ON MY DESK!
THEN...
YAAH! WHO PUT THAT THERE?
YES! I'LL LOOK AT IT, FRANKY. ANYTHING - SO LONG AS YOU LEAVE ME IN PEACE!
THANKS, BOSS. I'M GLAD YOU GOT THE POINT!

SPACE JUNK

Prize Washout

The Octopian entry caused a sensation at the Universal Swimming Championships by winning the freestyle race by over three clear lengths of the baths. However, only minutes after being declared the winner, he was disqualified by the panel of inter-galactic judges.

"He had an unfair advantage," a sports official announced after the contest. "With his *eight* legs he was able to propel himself like a squid!"



CRAZY QUESTIONS

What keeps the moon in place?

ITS BEAMS.

* * *

What fish is seen at night?

A STARFISH

DEPARTMENT S

THE SILENT MEN

IT BEGAN ONE WARM, SULTRY NIGHT ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF ISTANBUL – WHEN A CAR, CARRYING TWO OF THE DEPARTMENT 'S' TEAM, SLID TO A HALT AT THE GATES OF A SECLUDED, HEAVILY-GUARDED MANSION...

SULLIVAN AND KING! I BELIEVE YOU WERE WARNED TO EXPECT US...

YES, SIR! PLEASE DRIVE STRAIGHT TO THE HOUSE – EVERYTHING IS IN ORDER!

PURRING POWERFULLY, THE CAR MOVED FORWARD...

WELL, JASON, SO FAR, SO GOOD. ARE YOU EXPECTING TROUBLE?

I ALWAYS AM, DEAR BOY – BUT ESPECIALLY IN THIS CASE!

TWO TOP-LEVEL SCIENTISTS FROM THE EASTERN BLOC HAVE DEFECTED TO US VIA TURKEY. THE OTHER SIDE IS *BOUND* TO TRY AND STOP THEM BEFORE THEY REACH ENGLAND!

I DOUBT IT! THEY'LL BE FLYING OUT TOMORROW – SO ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS KEEP THEM SAFE UNTIL THE PLANE LEAVES!

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QUICKLY, THE TWO SECURITY OPERATIVES MADE THEIR WAY TO A BASEMENT – WHERE THE THIRD MEMBER OF DEPARTMENT 'S' WAS WAITING...

AH, ANNABELLE! AS RADIANT AS EVER, I SEE...

COMPETENT SECRETARIES ALWAYS ARE, MR. KING – BUT THANKS FOR THE COMPLIMENT, ANYWAY!

TURNING, THE GIRL SWITCHED ON A CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION SYSTEM...

THERE ARE YOUR SCIENTISTS. THEY'VE BEEN SITTING LIKE THAT, UPSTAIRS, SINCE I CAME ON DUTY.

EXCELLENT! WITH US WATCHING DOWN HERE AND THE GROUNDS OUTSIDE CRAWLING WITH GUARDS IT SHOULD BE A PEACEFUL NIGHT!

BUT STEWART SULLIVAN WAS WRONG! FOR, AT THAT MOMENT...

NIGHTJAR TO FOX. I AM IN POSITION – PROCEED WITH STAGE TWO...

ROGER! PROCEEDING NOW...

INSIDE THE HOUSE, A SHADOWY FIGURE SLIPPED ACROSS THE MAIN HALL...

A SMALL EXPLOSIVE CHARGE IN THE MAIN FUSE-BOX SHOULD BE ENOUGH. EVERYTHING'S SET...

NEXT MOMENT...

WHUUMP!

AS THE LIGHTS WENT OUT, FLAMES ENGULFED THE MANY DRAPES AND TAPESTRIES...

BY THE BEARD OF THE PROPHET, WHAT...?

SOME SORT OF EXPLOSION! THE WHOLE PLACE WILL GO UP! *RAISE THE ALARM!*

AS PANDEMONIUM BROKE LOOSE, JASON AND STEWART RACED FROM THE BASEMENT...

THE SCIENTISTS - WHERE ARE THEY? STILL UPSTAIRS?

I...THEY MUST BE, SIR - NO ONE HAS COME DOWN!

THE STAIRCASE WILL BE CUT OFF IN A MATTER OF SECONDS. WE *MUST* GET TO THEM BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

ANNABELLE, FIND A LADDER SOMEWHERE AND HEAD FOR THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE. WE'LL TRY AND HELP THOSE BOFFINS OUT OF THE WINDOW!

FEARLESSLY, THE AGENTS LEAPT THROUGH THE WALL OF FIRE. AND...

THERE - SECOND DOOR ON THE LEFT. IT'S GOING TO BE TOUCH AND GO!

THEN, COME ON - THAT GUARD CAN HELP US, TOO...

THWACK!

BUT, NEXT MOMENT, TO JASON'S AMAZEMENT...

A LITTLE SURPRISE, MY FRIENDS - JUST TO DELAY YOU WHILE I MAKE MY **OWN** GETAWAY!

GNNG!

SECONDS LATER, THE TREACHEROUS GUARD HAD VANISHED THROUGH A FIRST-FLOOR WINDOW...

PLANNED! STEWART, THIS WHOLE THING'S BEEN **PLANNED!**

FORGET IT! NO ONE CAN POSSIBLY HAVE REACHED THOSE SCIENTISTS YET!

FRANTICALLY, THEY BURST INTO THE HEAT-FILLED ROOM—THEN STOPPED DEAD...

N...NO, IT CAN'T BE— IT'S **IMPOSSIBLE!**

IMPOSSIBLE BUT **TRUE!** WE HAVEN'T BEEN WATCHING *MEN* FOR THE LAST HOUR!

...WE'VE BEEN GUARDING **WAX DUMMIES!**

LET'S KICK OURSELVES ABOUT IT OUTSIDE. THE WHOLE HOUSE IS GOING TO CAVE IN, ANY MINUTE!

TEN MINUTES LATER, IN THE EERIE LIGHT OF THE FLAMES...

FOOLED! Y...YOU MEAN, ALL THE TIME I WAS SITTING WATCHING THAT TV. SCREEN I WAS ACTUALLY LOOKING AT A PAIR OF DUMMIES?

EXACTLY! BUT WHAT BEATS ME IS HOW AND WHEN THE SWITCH TOOK PLACE?

BEFORE ANNABELLE CAME ON DUTY. THE FAKE GUARD WHO ATTACKED US OBVIOUSLY MADE THE SWITCH AND STARTED THE FIRE!

VERY CLEVER! WHILE WE BATTLED OUR WAY UPSTAIRS, THE REAL SCIENTISTS WERE BEING SMUGGLED OUT UNDER COVER OF THE SMOKE. THE PERFECT DIVERSION!

M-A-N-N. WHAT IS IT, A NAME? MAYBE THE GUARDS RECOGNIZED ONE OF THE AGENTS!

MANN

GRIMLY, THEY MADE THEIR WAY TO THE MAIN GATES. AND THERE...

BOTH GUARDS— DEAD! THE KIDNAPPERS MUST HAVE HAD TRANSPORT READY OUTSIDE THE GROUNDS!

JASON! ONE OF THEM TRIED TO WRITE SOMETHING IN THE SAND. LOOK!

IF IT IS A NAME, IT'S CERTAINLY EUROPEAN – 'MANN', 'MANNERING'– A COMBINATION LIKE THAT...

ANNABELLE, CHECK ALL NAMES LIKE THAT WITH THE TURKISH AUTHORITIES!

BY NOON THE NEXT DAY, THE GIRL HAD CHECKED. BUT...

NOTHING, JASON! EVERY EUROPEAN BOOKED IN OR OUT IS AS CLEAN AS A WHISTLE. AND NO 'MANN-SOMETHING' AMONG THEM!

THERE **MUST** BE! WHAT ABOUT THE COMMERCIAL SIDE? AIRLINES, SHIPPING COMPANIES – ANY UNSCHEDULED DEPARTURES?

JUST A TRUCK BELONGING TO THE OVERLAND TRANSPORT COMPANY. IT LEFT AT DAWN WITH A LOAD OF DRESSES AND FASHION EQUIPMENT FOR A FIRM IN BELGRADE!

*FASHION EQUIPMENT! GREAT SCOTT! **THAT'S IT!***

EH? WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU BABBLING ABOUT?

NO TIME TO EXPLAIN NOW – JUST ASK CONTROL TO HAVE A HELICOPTER WAITING FOR US AT THE AIRPORT. *COME ON, STEWART!*

AN HOUR LATER, THE TWO AGENTS WERE SWEEPING LOW OVER THE DUSTY, RIBBON-LIKE ROAD THAT LED WEST FROM ISTANBUL...

JASON, HAVE YOU GONE MAD? I WISH YOU'D EXPLAIN...

QUIET – *THERE HE IS!*

JASON SNAPPED AN ORDER AND, SKILFULLY, THE PILOT LOWERED THE HELICOPTER OVER THE THUNDERING TRUCK...

WHAT...? THE DRIVER'S FIRING AT US!

PRECISELY! COME ON, LET'S GET DOWN THERE AND GIVE HIM A SURPRISE!

OVERLAND TRANSPORT COMPANY

INCH BY INCH, THEY WERE LOWERED ON THE SWAYING WINCH-CABLE...

OKAY, NOW JUMP! YOU HEAD FOR THE REAR OF THE WAGON WHILE I DEAL WITH THE DRIVER!

RIGHT! I ONLY HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!

OVERLAND

BUT JASON KING WAS NO FOOL! NEXT MOMENT...

BETTER JUMP CLEAR, OLD BEAN – I HAVE A FEELING THIS HEAP IS GOING TO CRASH!

THUUMP!

UUGH!

AND, SURE ENOUGH, ONLY SECONDS LATER...

OVERLAND TRANSPORT COMPANY

KER-RUNCH!

VAAGH!

LEAVING THE SENSELESS DRIVER WHERE HE LAY, JASON SPRINTED FOR THE REAR OF THE WAGON...

JASON, THIS WHOLE THING IS SLIPPING OVER THE EDGE. WHAT ARE WE *LOOKING* FOR?

THE FASHION EQUIPMENT. HEAVE IT OUT THE BACK – *HURRY!*

OVERLAND TRANSPORT COMPANY

THEY WORKED WITH FRANTIC SPEED...

CONCENTRATE ON THE DUMMIES – NEVER MIND THE REST. **MOVE!**

THAT'S THE LOT! JUMP FOR IT!

SECONDS LATER, JASON GENTLY TWISTED OFF ONE OF THE DUMMIES' HEADS...

WELL, I'LL BE... A NEW KIND OF TRAVELLING 'COFFIN' – COMPLETE WITH AIR HOLES FOR BREATHING!

JUST SO! THE OTHER SCIENTIST WILL NO DOUBT BE EMBALMED IN ANOTHER OF THE DUMMIES. DRUGGED AS THIS ONE IS!

IT TOOK ONLY MOMENTS TO FIND HIM. THEN...

I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND – HOW ON EARTH DID YOU GUESS?

SIMPLE! THE GUARD SCRAWLED 'M-A-N-N' IN THE SAND – WHICH WAS *NOT* A MAN'S NAME, BUT SOMETHING HE SAW IN THE TRUCK...

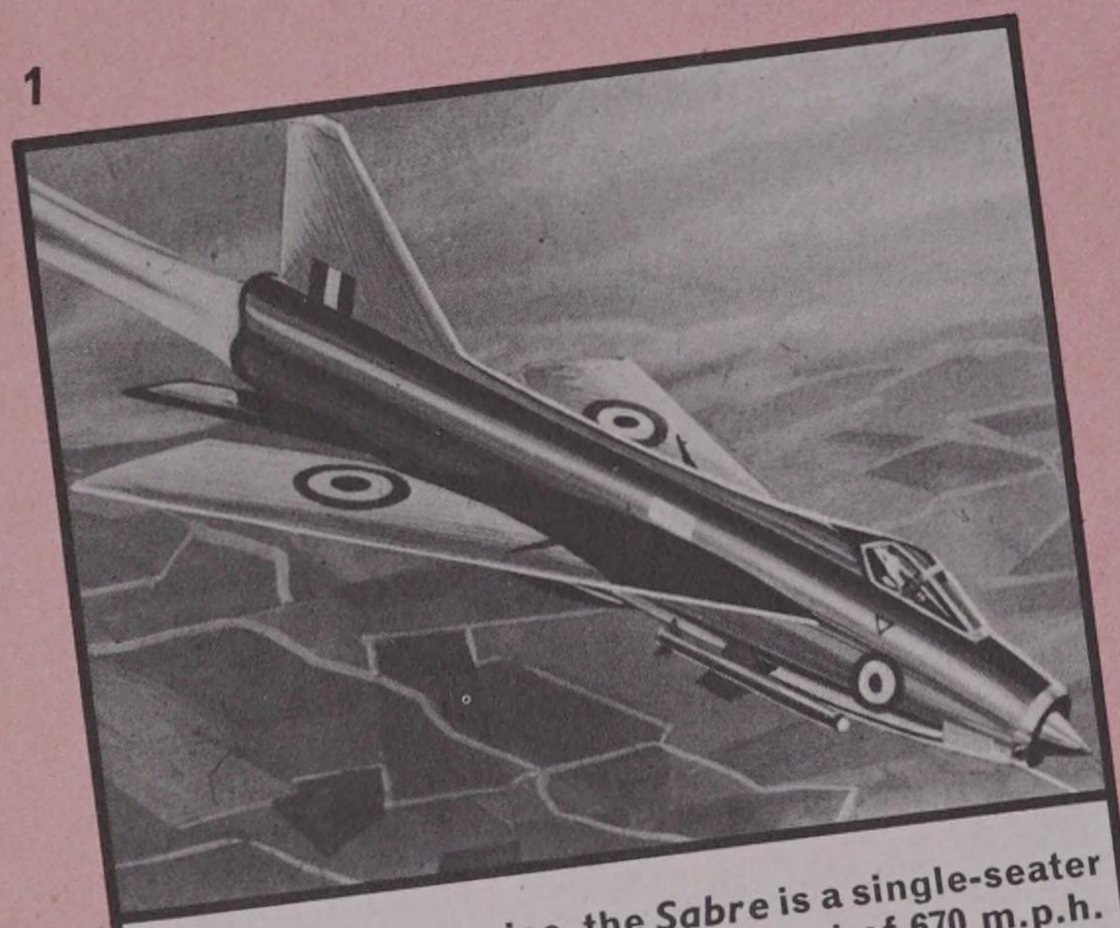
THE START OF THE WORD 'MANNEQUIN', SOMEONE WHO MODELS CLOTHES – A TAILOR'S DUMMY – **FASHION EQUIPMENT!**

WITH THOSE WAX DUMMIES IN THE HOUSE, YOU REALIZED YOU WERE UP AGAINST AN EXPERT MODELLER, EH? JASON, YOU SHOULD STICK TO WRITING BOOKS – THE TRUTH YOU UNEARTH IS ALWAYS STRANGER THAN THE FICTION YOU WRITE!

SPOT-A

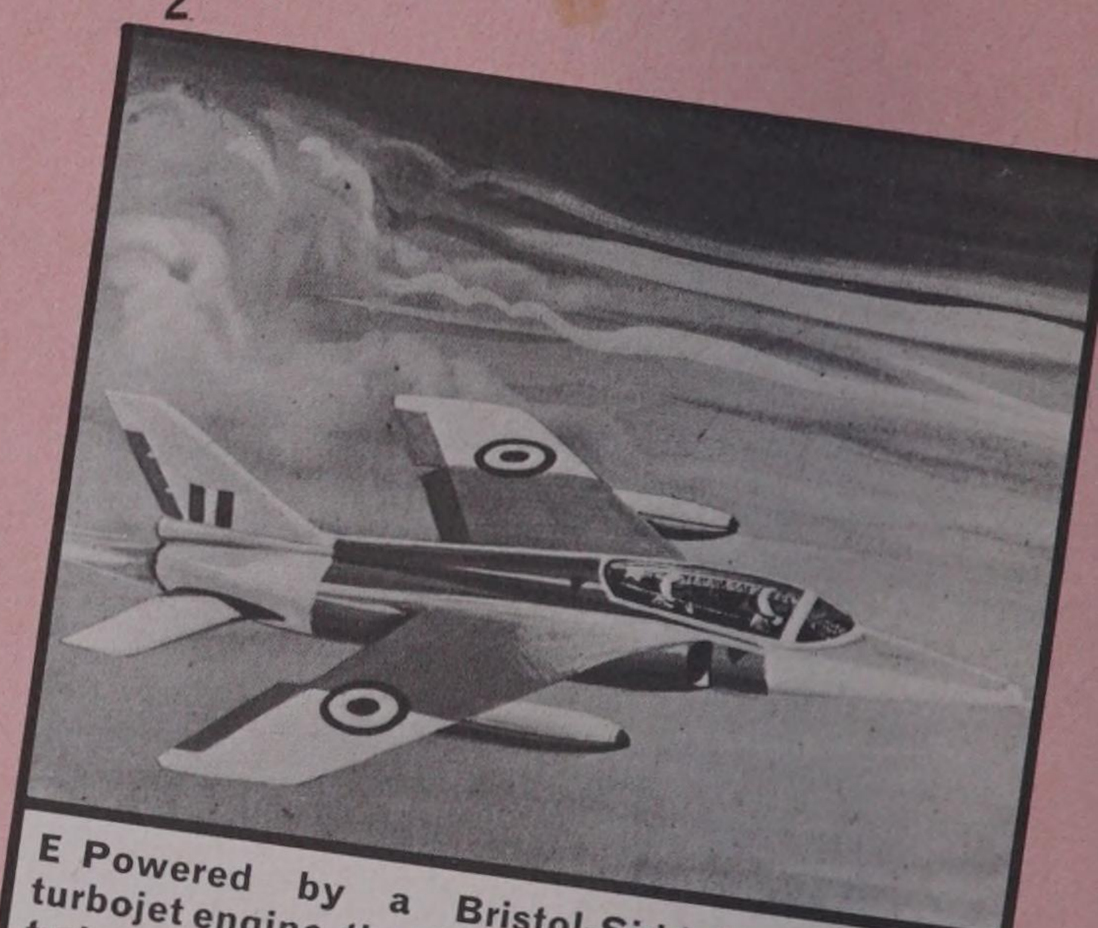
Similarly to the earlier aircraft quiz, on pages 34–35, try and match up all the captions with their correct

1



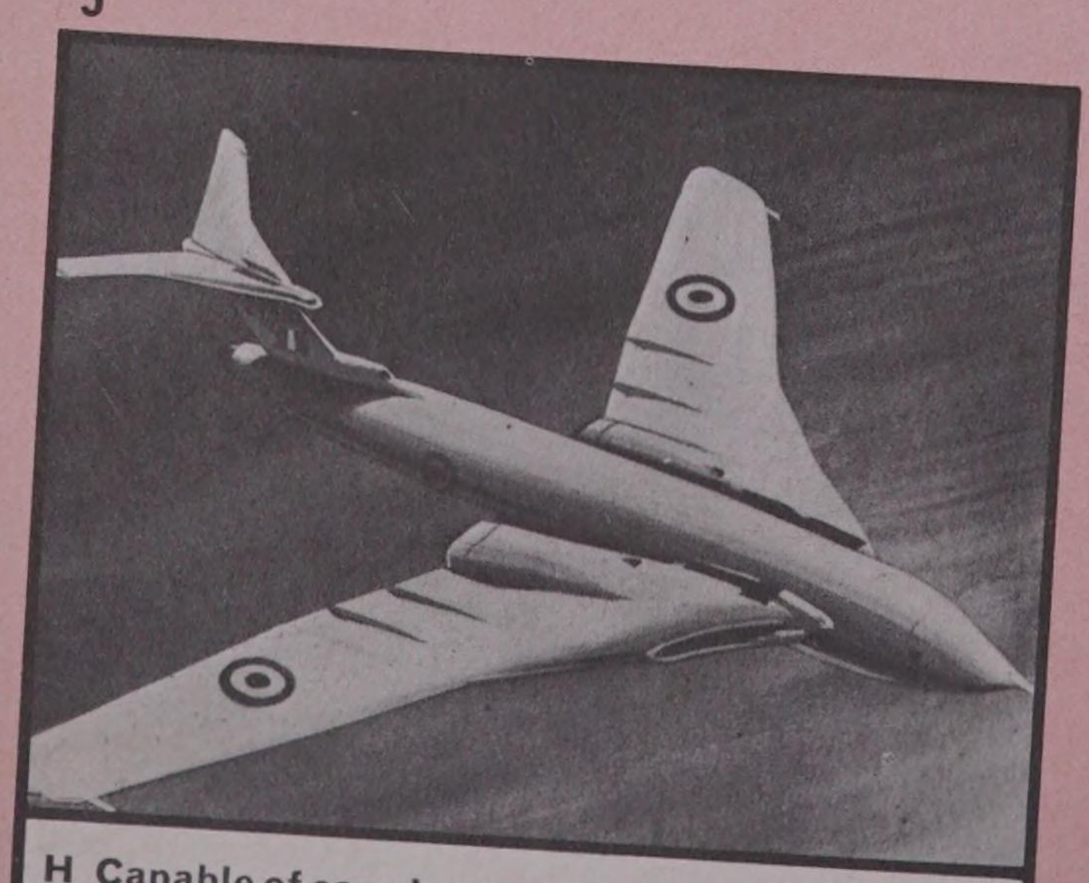
C Now out of service, the *Sabre* is a single-seater interceptor with a maximum speed of 670 m.p.h. Its operational range is 1,250 miles. Length: 37 feet 6 inches; wing span: 37 feet 1 inch.

2



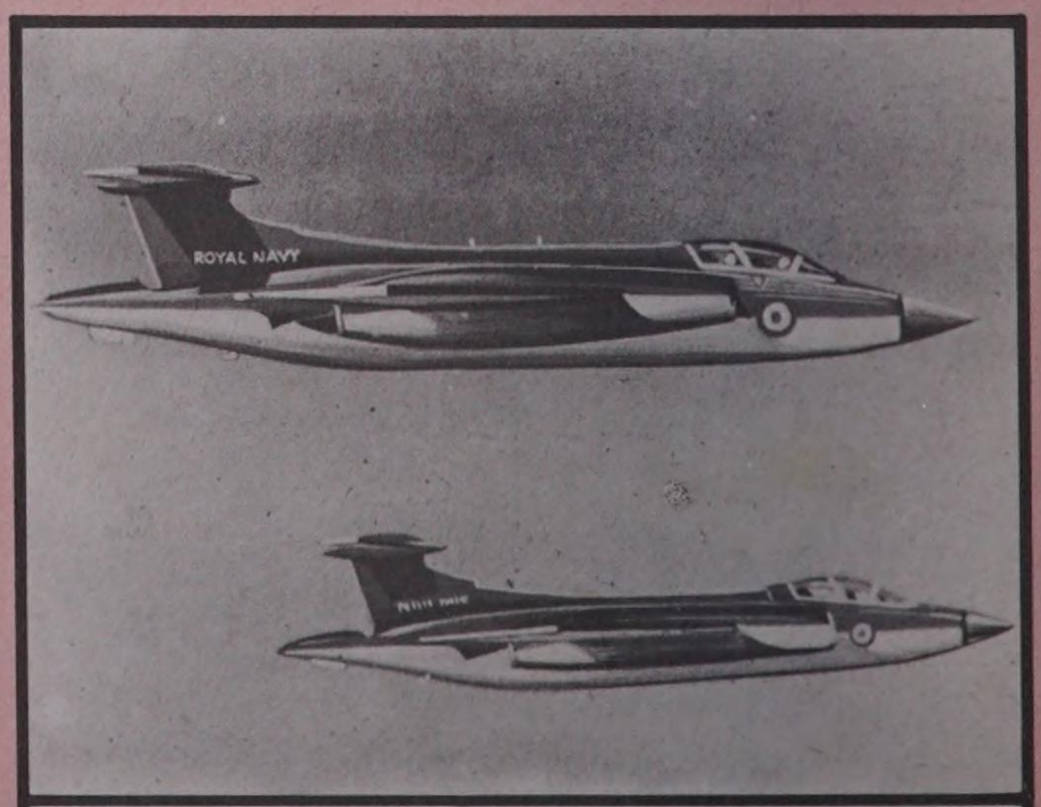
E Powered by a Bristol-Siddeley Orpheus turbojet engine, the *Gnat* is the R.A.F's advanced trainer. It is extremely manoeuvrable and has a high rate of climb=40,000 feet in 7 minutes. Length: 31 feet 9 inches.

5



H Capable of carrying up to 16 troops, the *Wessex* can also be equipped with eight stretchers. It is powered by two Gnome turboshaft engines, but is capable of flying on one. Length: 48 feet 4½ inches.

6

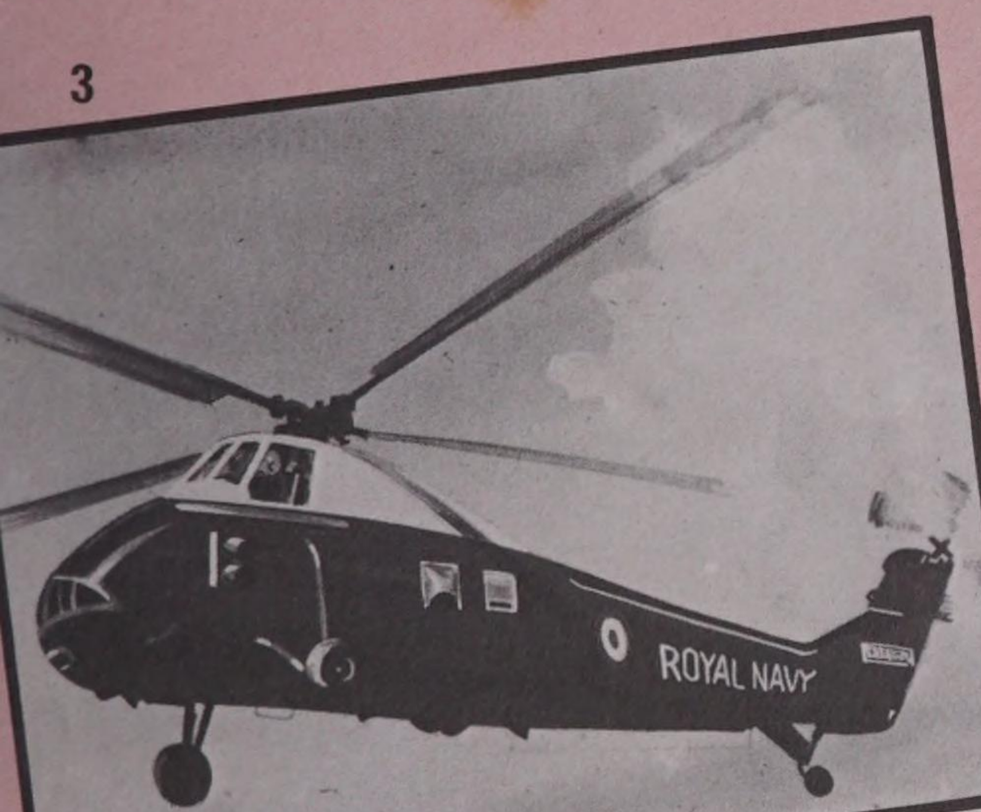


G The *Victor* serves as a tanker for refuelling aircraft during flight. Powered by four Armstrong-Siddeley Sapphire turbojets, it has an approximate speed of Mach. 0.92 and an operational range of 5,000 miles. Length: 114 feet.

PLANE!

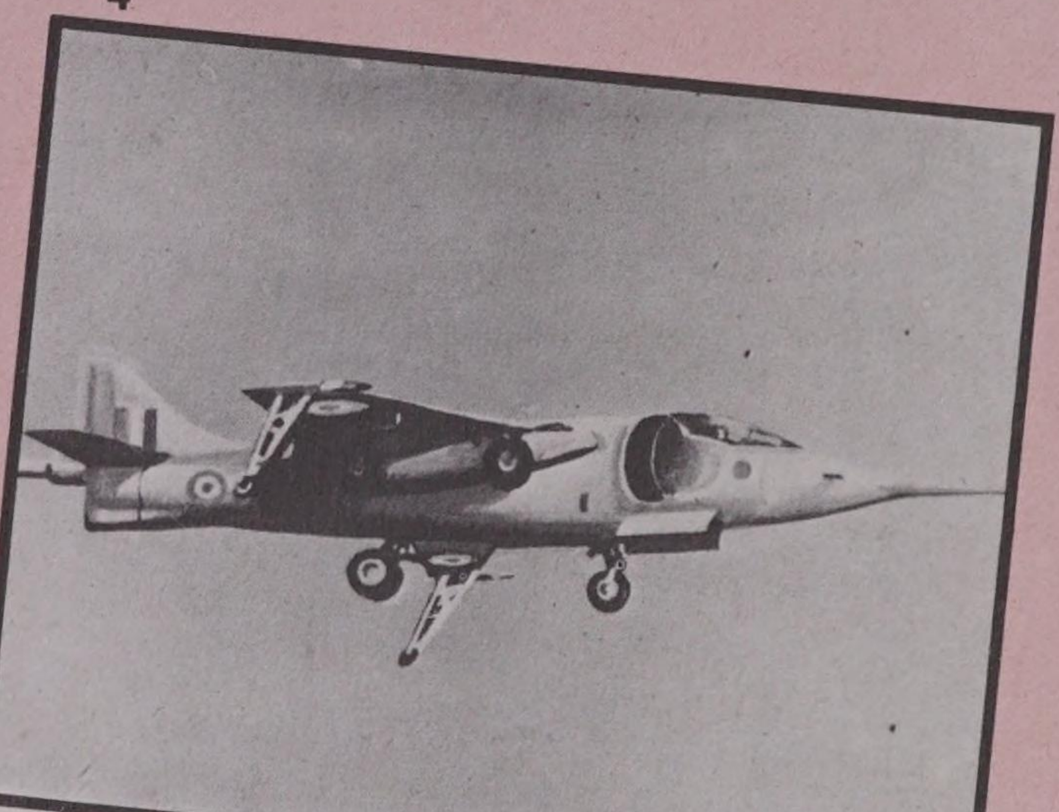
pictures. At the moment they do not <u>necessarily</u> correspond. The answers are at the foot of the page.

3



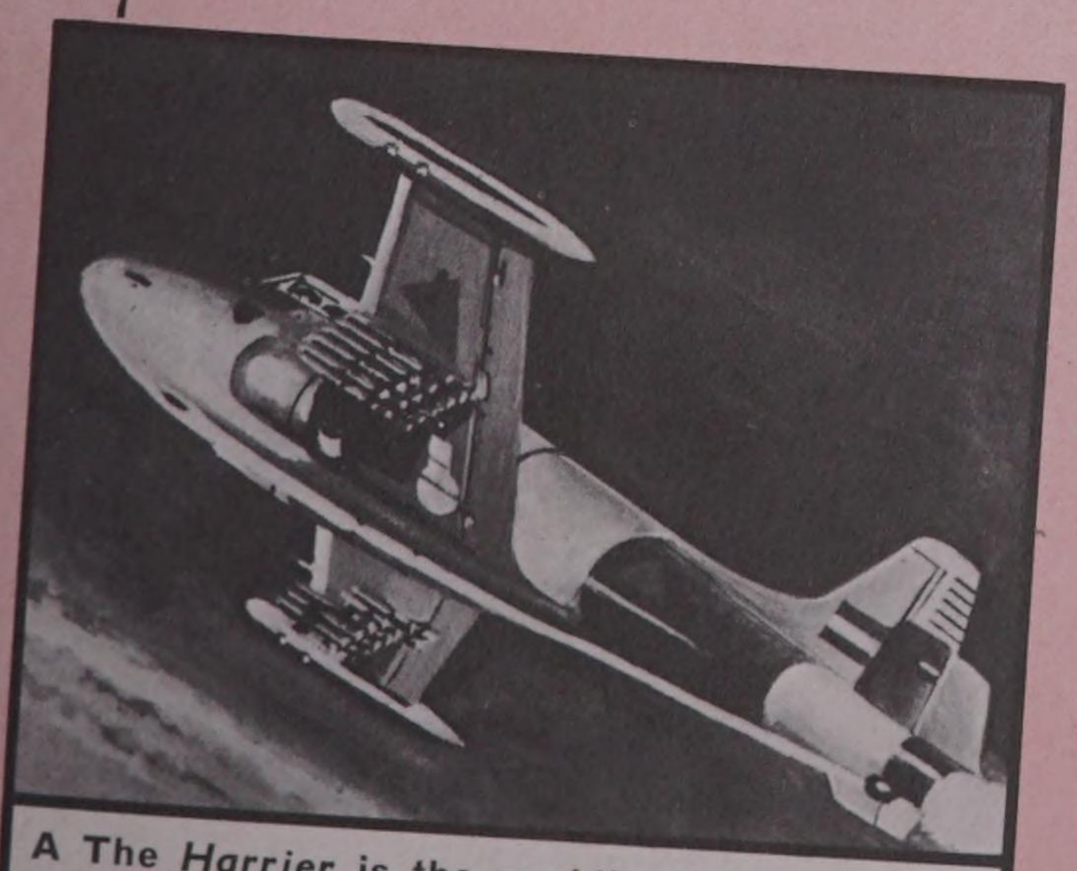
F The *Buccaneer* is used in a maritime air operational role. Powered by two Rolls-Royce Spey engines, it is sometimes equipped with the Anglo/French Martel air-to-surface guided missile. Length: 62 feet 4 inches.

4



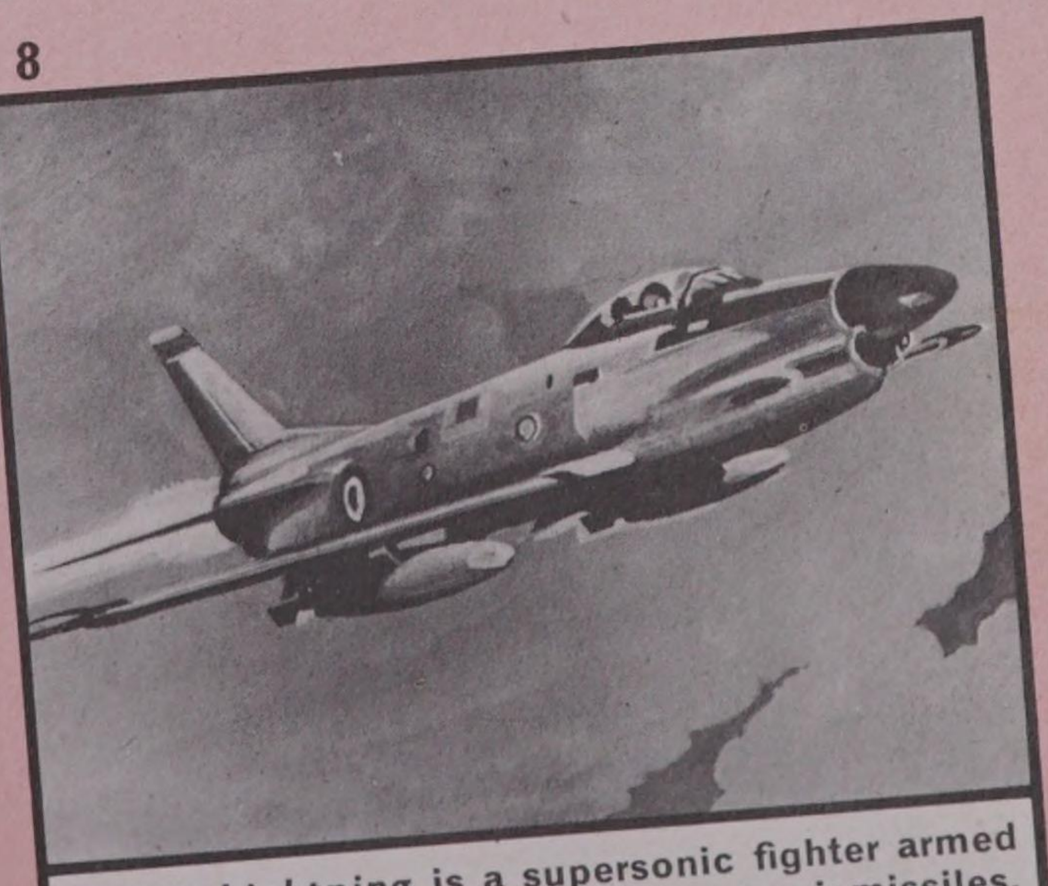
B The *Jet Provost* is the standard basic trainer of the R.A.F. Powered by a Bristol-Siddeley Viper turbojet engine, it has a maximum speed of Mach. 0.73. Length: 32 feet 5 inches.

7



A The *Harrier* is the world's first operational V/STOL ground attack fighter; it is a development of the Kestrel trials aircraft and is powered by a Pegasus turbofan engine. Length: 42 feet; wing span: 22 feet 10 inches.

8



D The *Lightning* is a supersonic fighter armed with two Firestreak or Red Top air-to-air missiles. It can fly at 1,500 m.p.h. and is equipped for refuelling in flight. Length: 55 feet 3 inches; wing span: 34 feet 10 inches.

Answers: 1=D; 2=E; 3=H; 4=A; 5=G; 6=F; 7=B; 8=C.

ASTRONAUT'S ALERT!

It's thumbs up, the capsule entrance hatch opens and the astronaut steps slowly forward . . .

Seconds later, he finds himself floating weightlessly in the void of outer space, his only link with humanity being the air-carrying 'umbilical cord' to which he is attached.

Below him he sees a shrouded planet which he knows, incredibly, is Earth! For a brief moment his thoughts wander, absorbing the uncanny sight which few other men have ever witnessed. Everything seems so peaceful—far from the hubbub of worldly life. Then his attention turns to the specially-designed camera he carries, ready to take the most fantastic film of his life.

But even at that split-second, disaster strikes! The main capsule rocks unexpectedly and from within the control room, the second astronaut fires stabilizer jets on the sides of the craft. He knows only too well, that otherwise the drift could snap the lifeline to his colleague outside.

There is a stifled yell from the 'space-walker'. Unknowingly he has drifted into the direct line of fire from one of the jets. Now, the intense heat severs his air-line—and his one contact with the capsule.

He has only a brief moment to save himself. Test your powers of survival and see if YOU can rescue him . . .

Turn to page 80 for the answer.

PLANET-HOPPING

You've been pedalling furiously up the hill and you're out of breath when you reach the top. It feels great when you begin to roll down the other side, restoring your strength by free-wheeling.

Free-wheeling—that's the secret of the most ambitious robot space-probe ever dreamed up by space scientists. The idea is to send an automated spacecraft to the fringes of the solar system by taking advantage of a gravitational free ride—much the same as a cyclist does when he stops pedalling and rolls down a slope.

American scientists call the plan the *Grand Tour of the Planets.* If it comes off it will make a flight to the moon look like a short bus-ride. To go to the moon by rocket takes less than three days. By contrast, the trip to the outer planets would take ten years. But there's a good chance that it will be attempted—and quite soon. Before 1980, in fact.

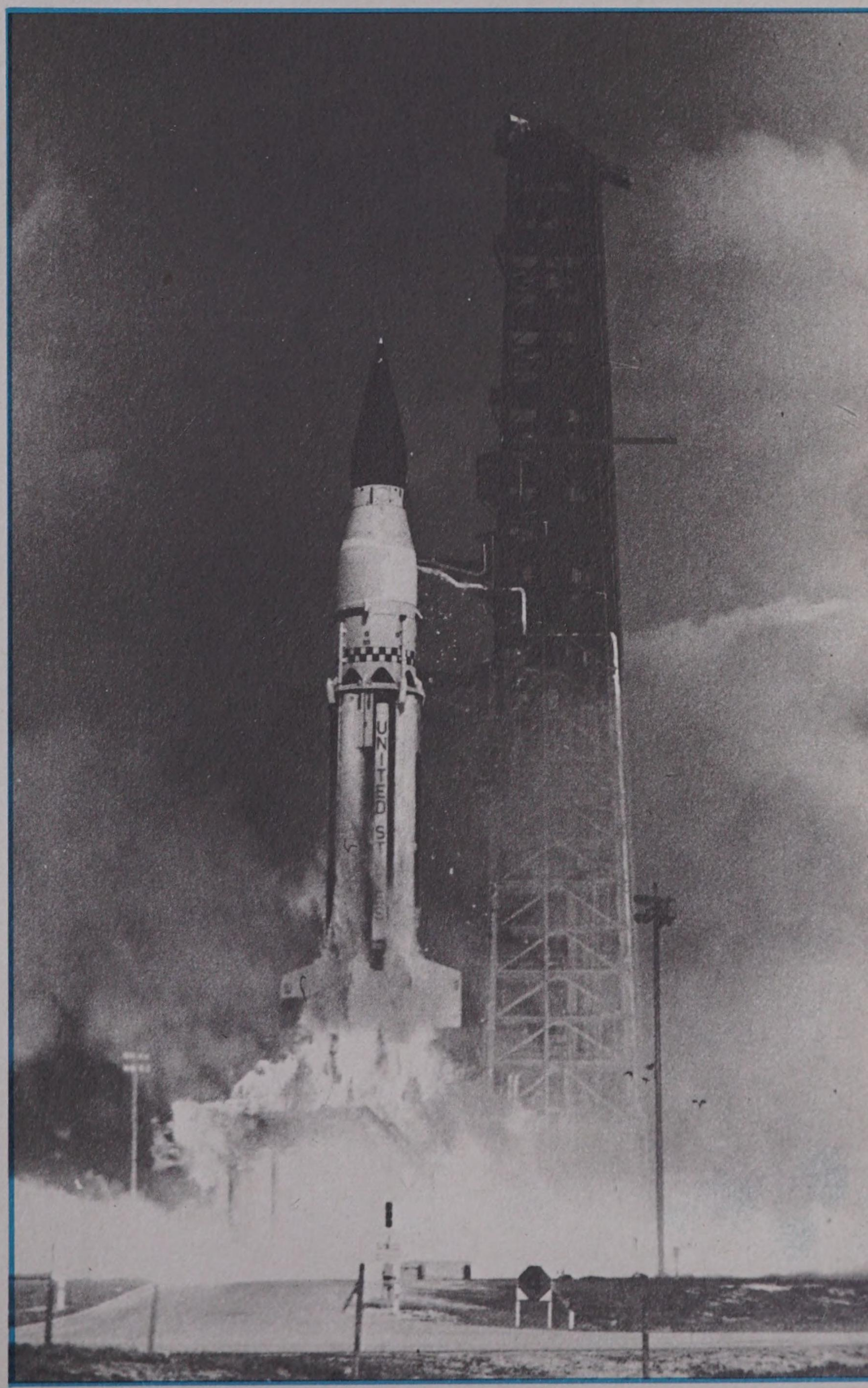
The reason is simple—and compelling. Toward the end of the 1970s the outer planets—Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto—will be in just the right position to make a Grand Tour possible. The next favourable opportunity will not occur for another 180 years.

And without the free-wheeling technique, it would take a spacecraft more than 40 years to reach Pluto on a direct flight.

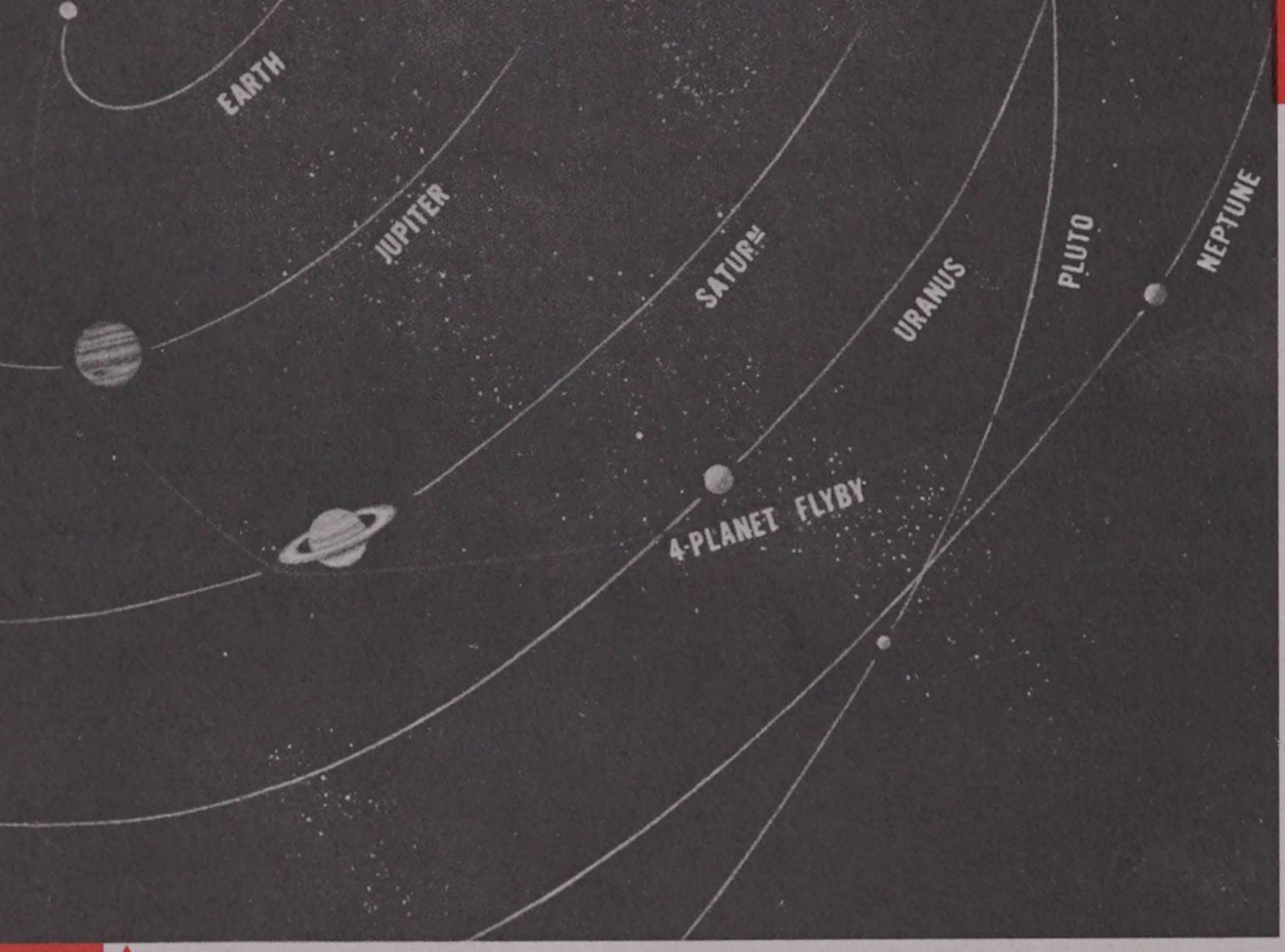
So the chances are good that a single, automatic spacecraft will be launched to fly reasonably close to all the outer planets by taking advantage of the gravitational pull of each in turn. In this way the spacecraft would be whipped from one planet to another without the need for any extra rocket power.

That is the basic plan. But several interesting variations are possible. Two spacecraft could be used, one making an extensive tour of Jupiter, Saturn and Pluto, with the other flying past Jupiter, Uranus and Neptune.

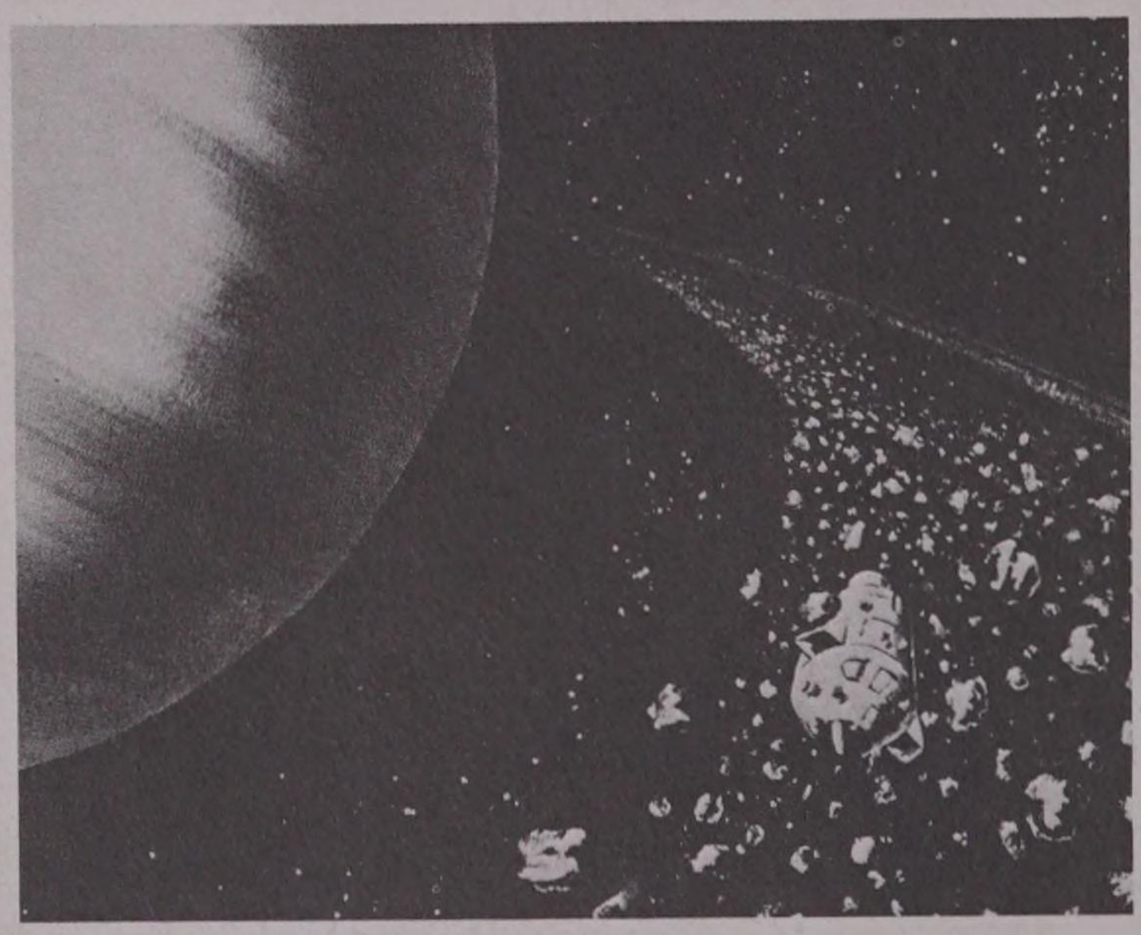
Or the main spacecraft could be designed to eject a module, or capsule, before it reached Jupiter. Under the gravitational influence of the planet, the capsule would make a giant U-turn, way out in space, in order to rendezvous and study Halley's Comet,



A rocket as powerful as this would be able to send a distant planetary probe on its way.

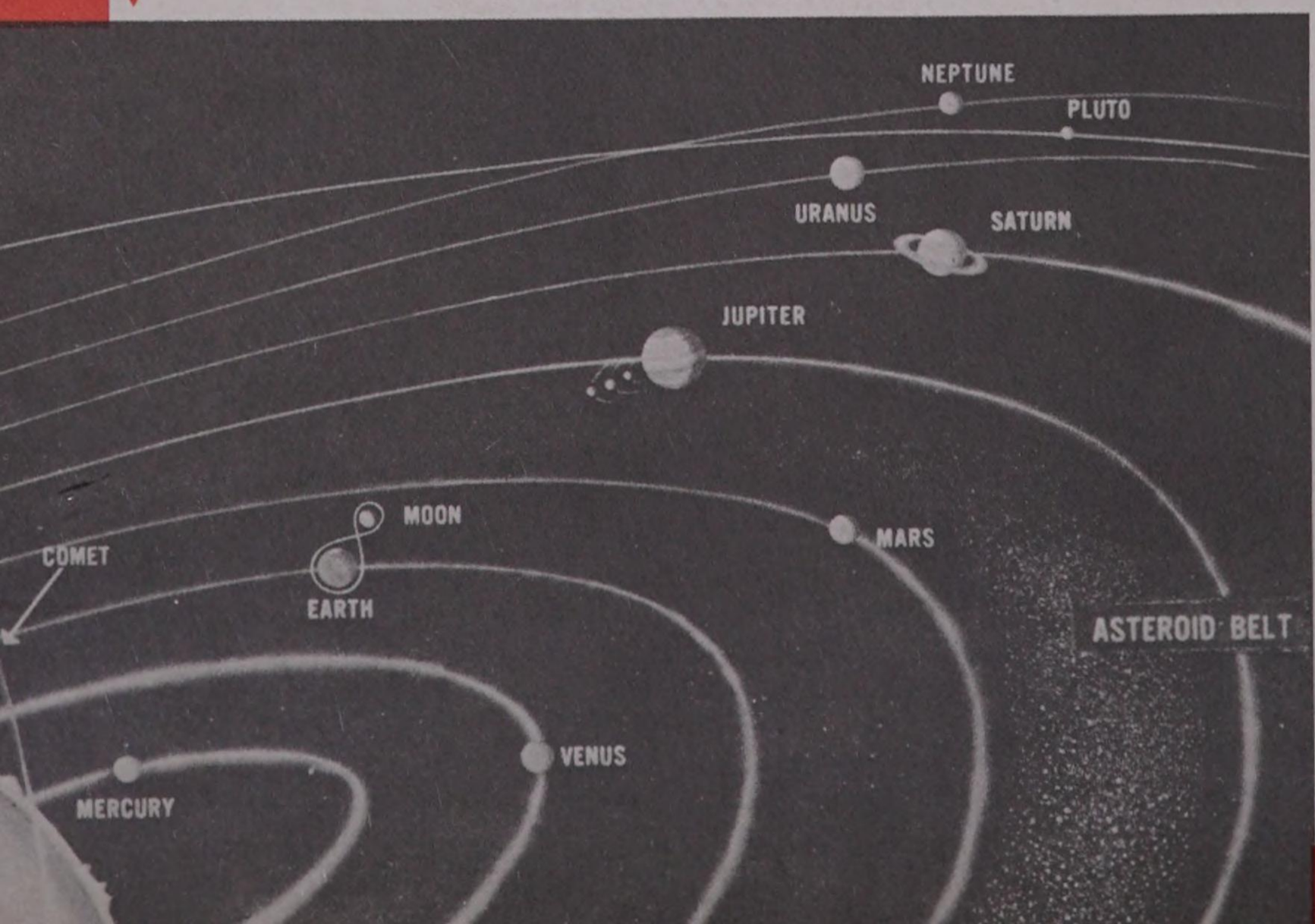


Plan of a possible Grand Tour exploration route.



The unmanned spacecraft might be able to solve the Saturn ring mystery.

By free-wheeling from planet to planet, the automated spacecraft could possibly even reach the outermost planets of our solar system.



which is due to pass through the asteroid belt in 1985. In the meantime, the main spacecraft could continue the Grand Tour.

What do the boffins hope to gain from such a mission? First of all, a lot more information on how the solar system was formed. At present there are two main theories. One holds that the planets were torn away from the sun, probably by collision with another star which may have been a 'twin' of the sun in a double-star system. The other theory suggests that the sun, either when it was formed or at a later date, was surrounded by a cloud of interstellar gas, which gradually condensed, broke away, and formed the planets.

The Grand Tour probe might also indicate whether there is some form of life on Jupiter. In recent years, some scientists have put forward the view that Jupiter, rather than Mars, might be the only other planet in the solar system to harbour life.

The robot probe to the outer planets could also provide clues to the changes and processes which made our own planet habitable.

Most exciting of all would be the prospect of close-up pictures of the distant planets.

What an achievement that would be —transmitting pictures back to Earth over three thousand million miles of space. And what surprises such photographs could hold in store!

Remember Mariner 4? It was the American planetary probe which in 1965 took twenty pictures of the Martian landscape as it sped past the Red Planet. These few pictures were sent back electronically and reassembled at a ground station. But they showed something quite plainly that many astronomers had never suspected—that the surface of Mars is pitted with craters and looks more like the moon than the Earth. And this was not the only surprise. The Mariner 4 pictures gave no clear evidence of the so-called Martian 'canals' — the straight-line markings which can be seen faintly through optical telescopes. These 'canals' were at one time thought to be something built on the planet by a superior intelligence, but this theory is now discredited.

More recent pictures of Mars, obtained in the summer of 1969 by two more American craft, Mariners 6 and 7, revealed large areas of devastated territory—the kind of wasteland

one would expect to find after a severe earthquake. The two hundred or so pictures from these spacecraft showed scores of craters as well as the planet's polar ice caps. But again there were no signs of the canals.

Before the Grand Tour gets under way, more instrumented spacecraft will have flown close to Mars and preparations may be well advanced for a manned landing which should finally clear up some of these mysteries.

By that time scientists will have turned some of their attention to the deeper mysteries waiting to be unravelled by the ten-year tour of the outer planets.

Prime target is of course Jupiter, the biggest planet in the solar system. It remains a mystery because its surface is completely covered by dense clouds, thousands of miles thick. Astronomers tend to think that it has a solid core and they speculate that this may be covered by a thick layer of ice. One thing they do know—it's a pretty cold place.

But this does not rule out completely the existence of some form of life. An American biochemist who has conducted laboratory experiments in a simulated Jupiter atmosphere believes that the chemical forerunners of animal life could have evolved there.

One particularly interesting feature of Jupiter's atmosphere is the famous Red Spot, which was discovered by a French astronomer in 1891. Later astronomers used this to measure the length of the planet's day—nine hours and fifty minutes—and to determine that Jupiter spins faster than any of the other planets in the solar system. But they still don't know what the Red Spot really is.

Other mysteries of Jupiter waiting to be solved: the recently discovered radio pulses emitted at random by the planet: and the even newer discovery that it gives out more than twice as much heat as it receives from the sun.

Saturn, the most distant of the planets that can be seen by the naked eye, resembles Jupiter in many ways, though it is smaller. Saturn's most interesting feature is its rings. These are really millions of fragments of rock, and probably the remains of a moon which drifted too close to the planet and broke up into tiny pieces.

Saturn also has ten moons, one of them bigger than the planet Mercury. It is possible that the Grand Tour probe could study several of these moons closely while observing the planet from a distance.

Beyond Saturn, the gaps in our knowledge of the solar system get very big indeed. Uranus and Neptune are even colder than Jupiter and their surfaces are permanently obscured by dense cloud cover. The atmospheric pressure is extremely high, so that if life has developed there it will not be in the form that we know it.

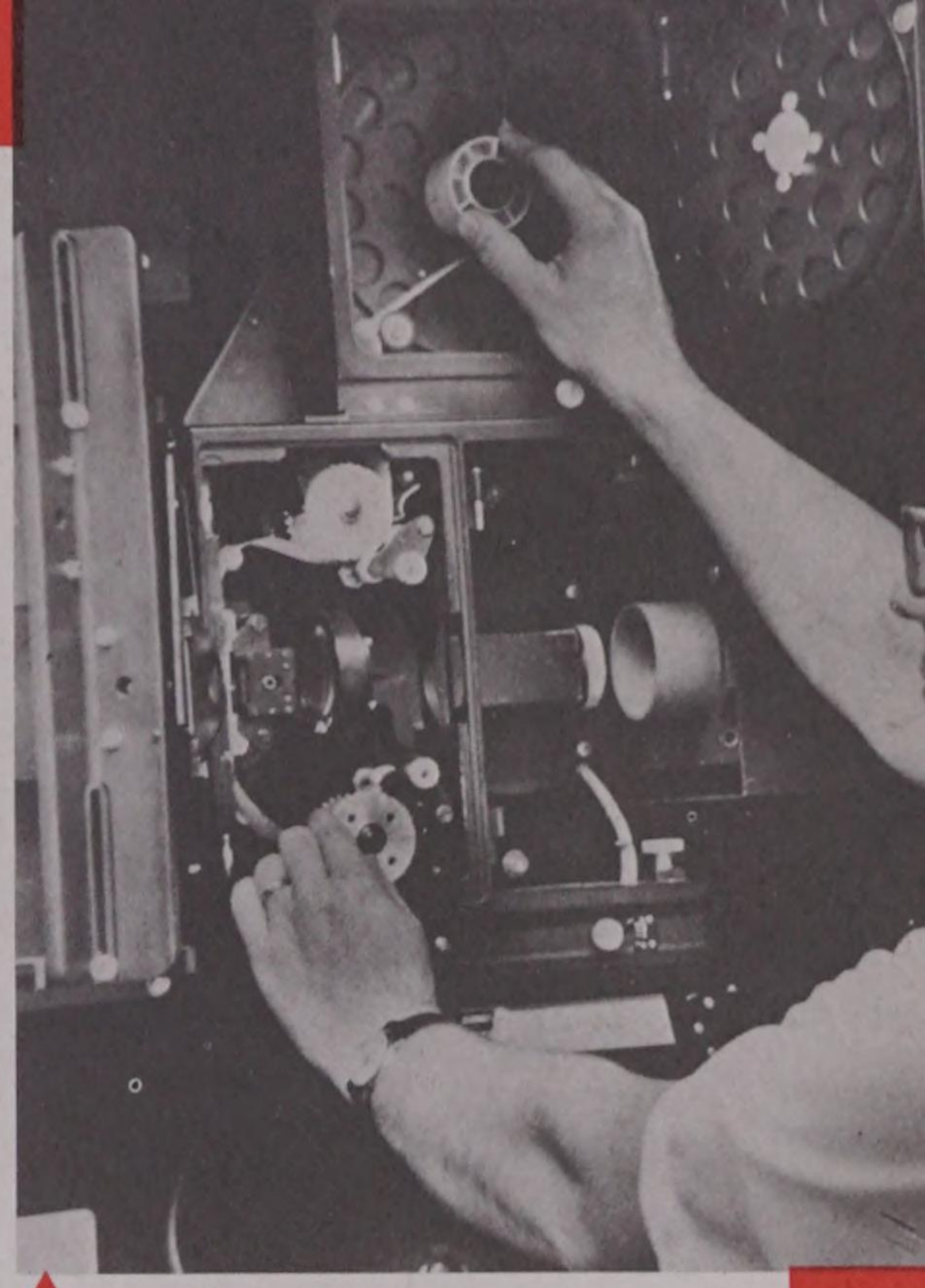
Pluto—discovered only 40 years ago—has an orbit so flattened that at times it approaches closer to the sun than Neptune does. This has given rise to the theory that it was once a satellite of Neptune, but in some mysterious way escaped from the gravitational bonds that tied it to the planet.

By using the free-wheeling—or planet-hopping—technique the savings in energy would be so great that present-day rockets like Titan-Centaur or Saturn V could be used.

The spacecraft for the flight would probably weigh about half a ton. It would carry a nuclear generator to supply power, and a range of equipment.

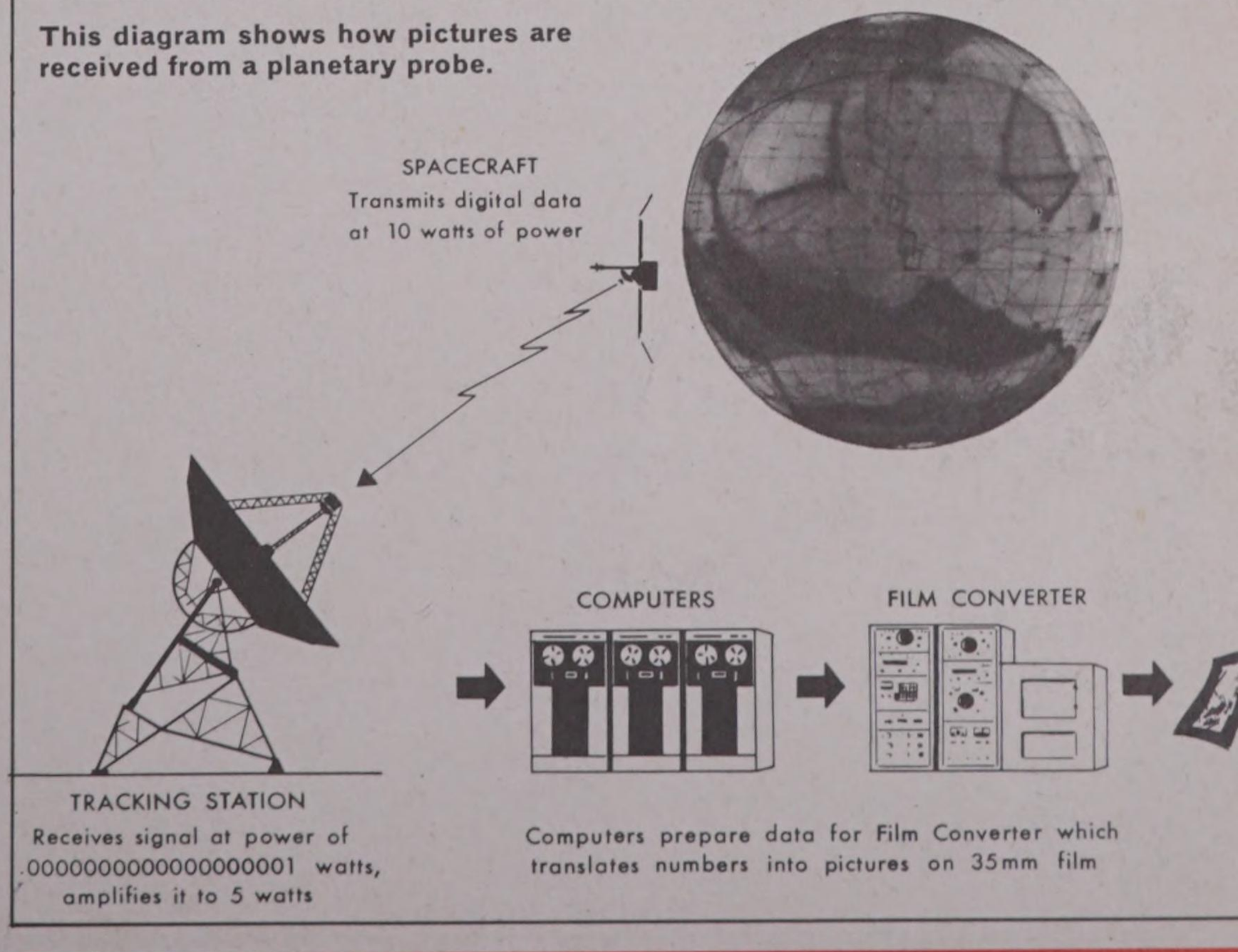
Because of the enormous distances over which signals would have to be received for the Grand Tour probe, the spacecraft would need a parabolic antenna which when deployed in space would look like a miniature Jodrell Bank.

This then, is the Grand Tour, a visionary, unmanned space venture of the next decade that will extend the frontiers of knowledge to the far reaches of the solar system.

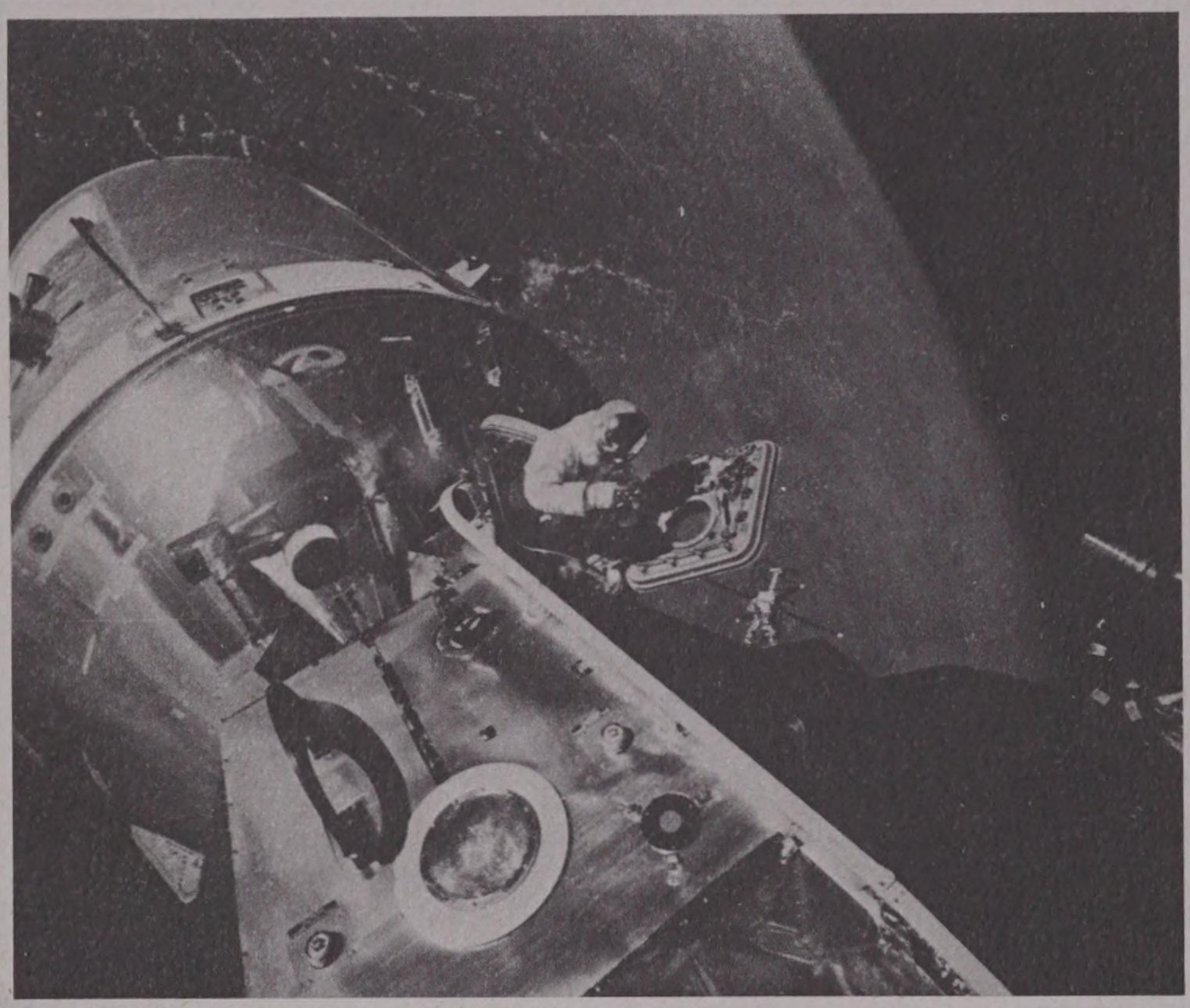


In the picture conversion process, the computer-prepared tape moves through the converter, where a very powerful light transforms the data into a visual image.

This diagram shows how pictures are received from a planetary probe.


SPACECRAFT
Transmits digital data at 10 watts of power
TRACKING STATION
Receives signal at power of .0000000000000000001 watts, amplifies it to 5 watts
COMPUTERS
FILM CONVERTER
Computers prepare data for Film Converter which translates numbers into pictures on 35mm film

HOW DO YOU RATE?



Solution to
ASTRONAUT'S ALERT!
(from page 76)

The immediate step the astronaut must take is to prevent losing the degree of air still left in that part of the lifeline which is still attached to him. He does this simply by placing his hand firmly over the end. With this limited air-supply assured, he then hurls the camera away from himself—and the direction of the capsule—as hard as he can under the weightless conditions. Then, similarly to throwing a ball away from you when swimming, the astronaut finds he is 'propelled' the other way, sufficiently to reach the capsule. Then he hurriedly pulls himself in through the hatch again!

Crosscode Messages (pages 42)

Orange message:
Captain Scarlet calling Cloudbase . . . all Angels prepare take-off. . . .

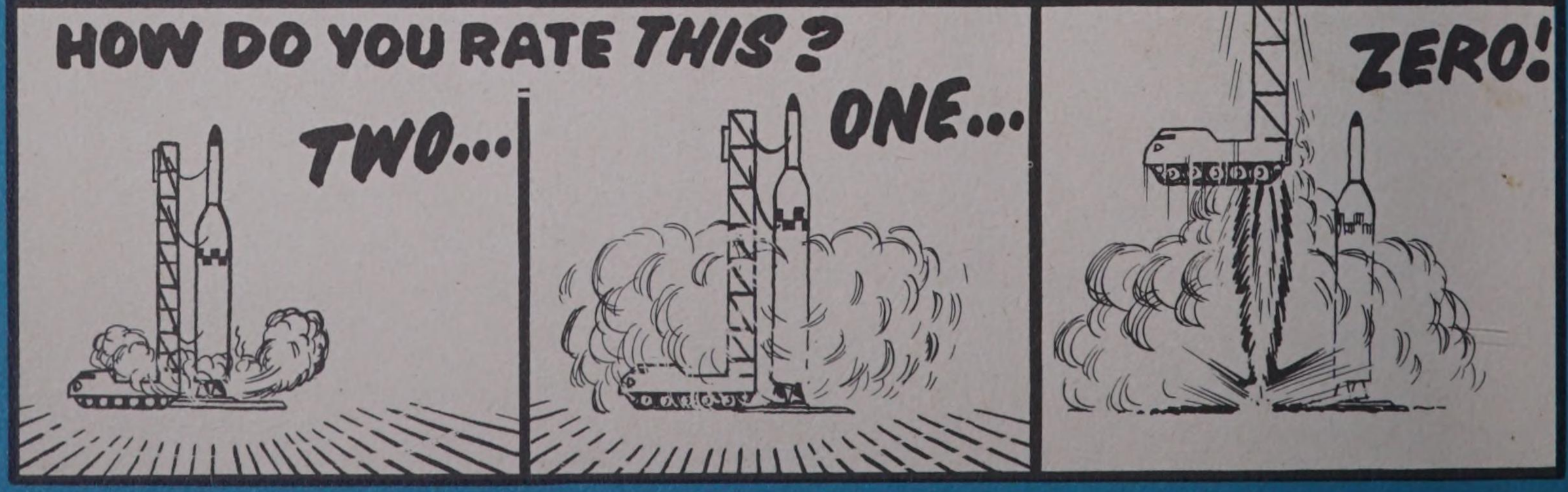
Mauve message:
Delta alert . . . attack craft and aerial rocket escort . . .

'Time-Gauge'
30 minutes or under=Well done! You have the potential of a top secret agent!
Between 31 minutes and one hour= With training, you could make the grade!
Over one hour=To be a secret agent, you'll need to think faster!

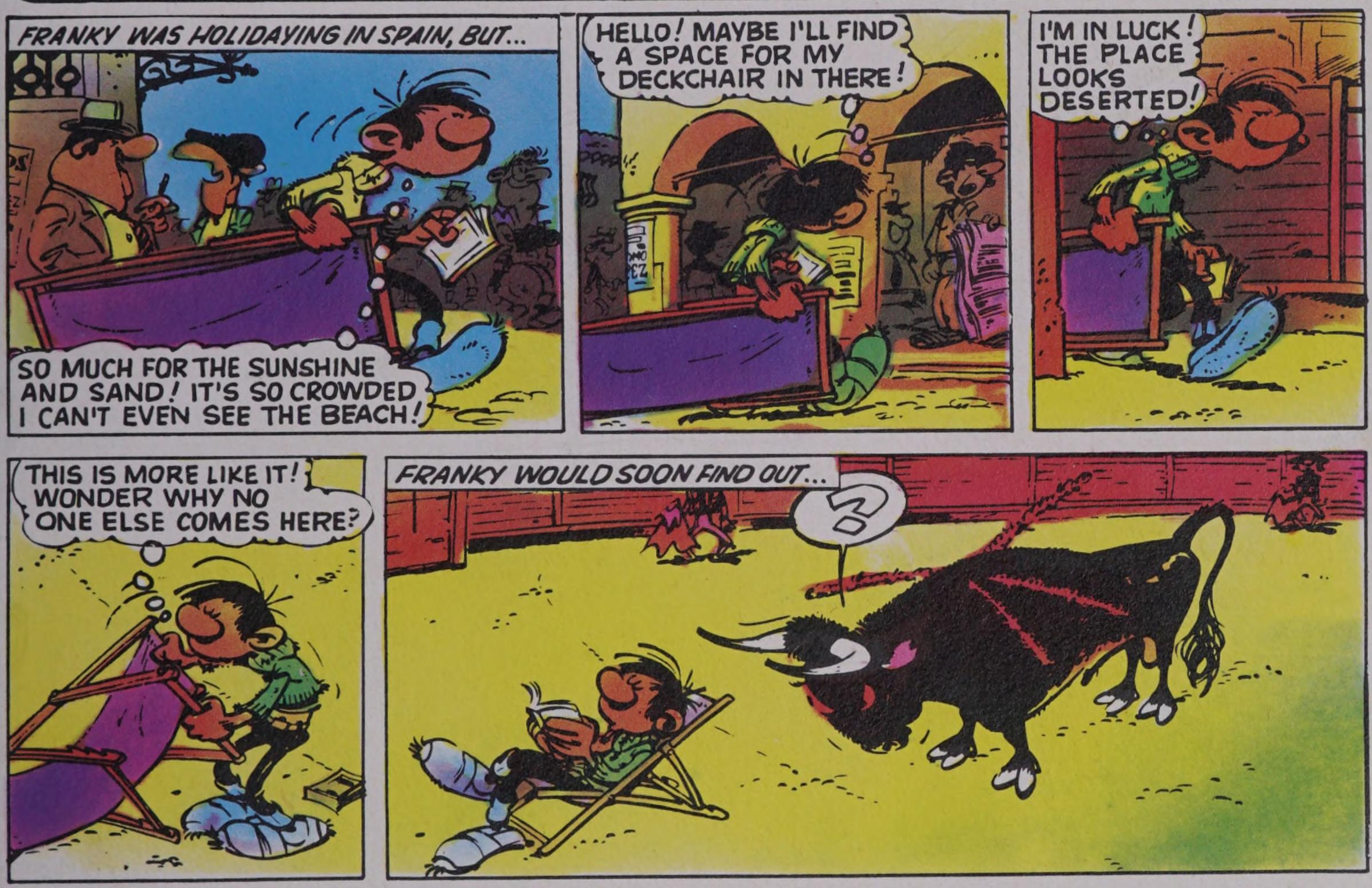
Answer to Crosscode. (page 42)

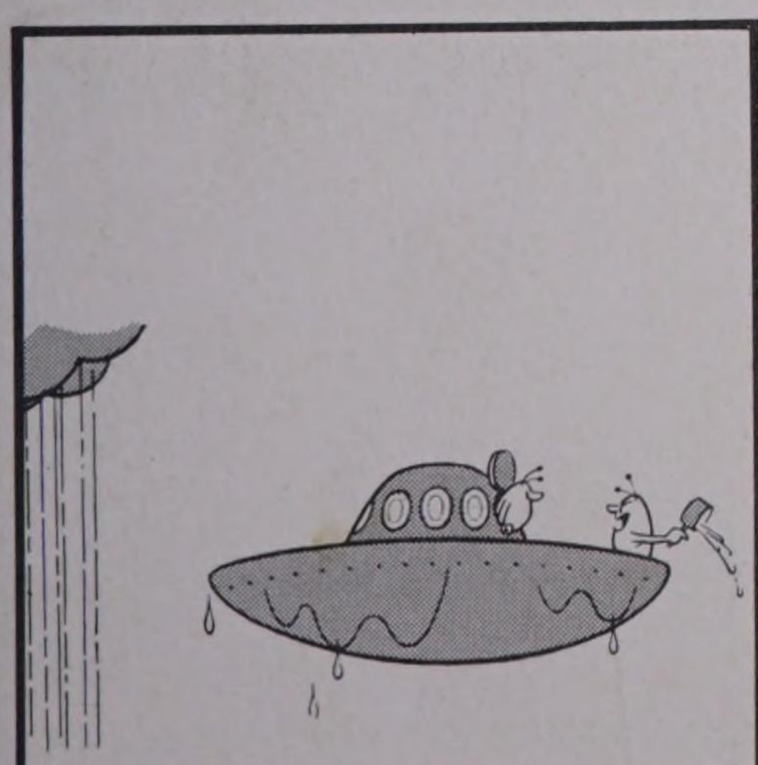
Across:
1. Captain; 5. Scarlet; 9. Deter; 10. Visor; 12. Ends; 14. Epic; 16. Calling; 18. Unlock; 20. Needle; 22. Cloud; 24. Base; 25. Pale; 26. A.D.A.; 27. All; 28. Pact; 30. Also; 32. Talks; 36. Treads; 38. Angels; 39. Prepare; 40. Butt; 42. Zero; 43. Inner; 45. Alive; 46. Take-off; 47. Dilutes.

Down:
2. Pods; 3. Attack; 4. Nor; 5. S.P.V.; 6. Lure; 7. Avenue; 8. Rocket; 11. Sign; 13. Delta; 15. Pedal; 17. Leo; 19. Created; 21. Explain; 22. Craft; 23. Draws; 29. Alert; 31. Steve; 32. Stable; 34. Lap; 35. Escort; 37. Spin; 38. Aerial; 41. Tick; 42. Zest; 44. R.A.F.; 45. And.



Cranky Franky- the nutty newsboy


FRANKY WAS HOLIDAYING IN SPAIN, BUT...
SO MUCH FOR THE SUNSHINE AND SAND! IT'S SO CROWDED I CAN'T EVEN SEE THE BEACH!
HELLO! MAYBE I'LL FIND A SPACE FOR MY DECKCHAIR IN THERE!
I'M IN LUCK! THE PLACE LOOKS DESERTED!
THIS IS MORE LIKE IT! I WONDER WHY NO ONE ELSE COMES HERE?
FRANKY WOULD SOON FIND OUT...
?



"I can't stand a sloppy saucer!"

SPACE JUNK

CRAZY QUESTIONS

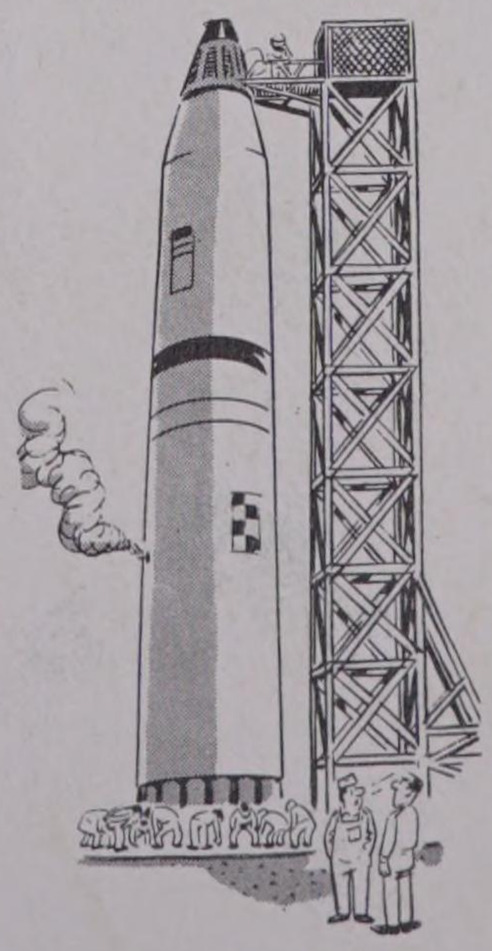
What's dangerous and only seen at night?

A SHOOTING STAR.

* * *

What might an astronaut wear to keep him warm?

APOLLO-NECKED JUMPER!



"I think he dropped his sandwiches!"

CAPTAIN SCARLET IN

DECOY TO DISASTER!

With a sharp crackle, the aircraft's radio went dead. The pilot looked across at his number two and there was panic in his eyes.

It had all happened so fast. One minute Flight Captain Jeff Carson was flying the huge super-jet bomber on routine patrol, the next it was hurtling from the sky.

They had seen the blur of an unidentified black fighter-plane sweep across their flight path and then the orange brilliance of a cannon burst.

A wild shuddering of the controls and the sound of the ominous voice over the radio would have shattered the nerves of the bravest man.

What had the voice said? the pilot asked himself as he fought desperately to control the doomed bomber.

'We will destroy Captain Scarlet.' That was the grim message. 'Captain Black and the Mysterons will be avenged.'

Jeff Carson remembered hearing something about a Captain Black from the Spectrum organization. He had been killed on an expedition to Mars.

It was all so confusing. What did it all mean?

Carson's mind was full of these and other strange thoughts as the mountain range loomed ahead of them.

"Eject!" shouted the captain, and the other three crewmen reached out, groping for their individual abort levers. But it was too late.

Tearing, rending metal grazed the first peak and then the disintegrating aircraft exploded, fuel tanks igniting like fire crackers at a bonfire party.

Even at that moment, the black fighter circled eerily—like a vulture over its prey. Then all was still and silent—save for the shrill, wailing whine from the sinister craft's powerful jets. At its controls, Captain Black allowed himself a rare, evil smile—a grin of diabolical intent—as he looked down at the smouldering wreckage. Four men and two million dollars worth of aircraft had died.

Next moment, he pulled hard on the joystick and powered away from the scene of the crash. Behind him, two pale rings mysteriously travelled over the blackened metal that was no longer recognizable as a giant flying machine.

The Mysterons were reconstructing the bomber and its crew—the processes of retrometabolism were taking place.

Captain Scarlet put a hand to shield his eyes from the sudden gleam of sunlight that reflected from the smooth metal. Fascinated, he watched as the two missiles rose slowly from beneath the sandy soil.

"There they are, Captain," said Colonel White with pride. "The first fully-operational electron missiles."

Scarlet remained silent, almost hypnotized as the pointed weapons ascended from their underground emplacement. Then he nodded slowly.

"Another link in the chain of defence against Mysteron attack."

"Yes," agreed the colonel. "Soon we'll have a network of sites just like this one stretching round the world."

Scarlet remembered the planning and work that had gone into the development of the missiles. Many months ago Spectrum had discovered that electron charges were the only deterrent for mysteronized matter.

Now the boffins and technicians had managed to harness the great defensive power within the shape of the fastest and most accurate ballistic missile ever produced.

"Right, I guess it's time we returned to Cloudbase," snapped Colonel White as the dull green projectiles settled at the end of their rise to the surface. "Thought you'd be interested in this little trip, Scarlet—keep you up to date with developments."

Scarlet nodded his appreciation as they moved towards the Spectrum Helijet that would soon be winging them back to the fantastic base high above the clouds.

© 1971 Century 21 Productions

The aircraft exploded, its fuel tanks igniting like fire crackers at a bonfire party, as the black fighter circled eerily nearby.

Captain Blue learned of the loss of World Air Force bomber BA 127 from one of the routine computed reports that were constantly fed into Cloudbase's information systems.

Normally he would have been sorry to receive the news—but it would have been filed in the negative action drawer, not within the sphere of Spectrum's operations. But there was something about that number!

Blue checked another computer read-out sheet after pressing a series of programme control buttons. Yes. He was right. Captain Jeff Carson was the pilot of BA 127.

"Jeff and I were together at advanced pilot training college," he told Colonel White after Spectrum's chief had studied the report. "Is there anything we can do to help find the wreckage? Maybe he's still alive, wandering around in those mountains."

"That's a big area to cover, Captain," answered White, trying to let Blue down gently. "The air rescue boys know what they're doing. I think we ought to leave it to them."

Blue didn't really expect the colonel to send out a search party—but he felt so helpless, sitting safely up in the clouds, while a friend might be dying far below.

Then Lieutenant Green at the communications monitoring console interrupted his solemn thoughts.

"Colonel White, I'm getting some interference on Channel zero two." Green's voice held a tremor—he had lived through this moment many times before.

"Switch it to multiple audio," ordered White as he pressed the red panel set into his revolving desk. "I'll get Captain Scarlet in here."

Captain Paul Metcalf, Spectrum code-name Scarlet—was relaxing with Melody and Harmony Angel as the red warning light flashed on.

"That's for me," he announced, moving rapidly towards the door.

Within seconds he was striding in to

central control, a tight expression on his face. He stopped suddenly as the loud-speaker boomed out the ominous words.

"We the Mysterons will bomb New York City with BA 127."

For seconds there was silence as each man in that room took in the slow deep words that had issued the terrible threat. Colonel White was the first to shake himself from immobility of thought and action.

"BA 127. Isn't that the code-name of that bomber your friend was flying, Blue?"

"Yes, sir—that can only mean that his aircraft was forced down by the Mysterons."

Captain Blue's face went pale at the thought—*Jeff Carson* an agent for the most terrible enemy Earth had ever known.

"Get on to the Air Force," snapped White, now fully alert and efficient. "I want to know what armaments that bomber was carrying. If my guess is right, those bombers have planatomic missiles aboard."

The reply was swift. There was no doubt about the verdict. Five phase-two quadruple stick hydrogen bombs were aboard—the standard strike power of the aircraft—and the priming capsules were installed in the plane when it took off, ready to arm the weapons in an emergency.

"It looks as though the Mysteron threat is a real one," muttered White as he assessed the information.

"It usually is," cut in Scarlet grimly. "That aircraft is probably on its way to New York, right now."

"Colonel, sir!" Green's voice had a trace of hysteria about it as he swung round from the radio console in his swivel chair. "The World Air Force have news of BA 127."

Colonel White grabbed up the scrambler priority receiver from his desk. Scarlet could not fail to notice the shocked look on his chief's face, hearing only an occasional grunt of assent from White and nothing of the Air Force Commander's words.

White finished the call and slowly put down the receiver.

"Well, gentlemen," he said at last. "The problem gets more complex with every minute. The Air Force say that BA 127 has radioed in for a landing clearance at Prestwold airfield, a thousand miles from New York."

"But why? The Mysterons don't usually delay their plans."

"That's not important, Captain Blue," cut in White seriously. "What this does mean is that we have a chance to stop that aircraft before it can complete its mission."

"I'll get to Prestwold right away, sir." Scarlet did not need to be told what to do. He was Spectrum's main line of defence and attack when it came to dealing with the Mysterons.

By a freak of time and nature, Scarlet had survived death and had remained in a special twilight area of being indestructible, as were the Mysterons, but able to think and act for humanity on Earth.

Scarlet knew that Colonel White would have ordered him to wait for the aircraft to land and then try to take over the controls, so there was no point in waiting for the actual words—if he wanted to intercept the aircraft he would have to move quickly.

An Angel aircraft was the fastest fighter in the skies. Scarlet was sure Symphony Angel wouldn't mind him using her machine to reach Prestwold. The captain enjoyed flying solo. Up there in the clear blue sky a man felt free and away from the problems down on the ground. The sky seemed limitless and friendly with an unequalled peace.

He felt the wheels touch the tarmac of the military air base. His flight had been swift and straight and he knew as he glanced across the wide expanse of runways that he had arrived before the mysteronized bomber.

A few words exchanged with flight control at the base and he was making himself ready for the action which was to come. He had decided that he had to get aboard the plane before the crew could realize what was happening.

As soon as the fuselage door swung aside he had to be ready to leap inside. His electron gun would do the rest.

The distant drone of engines made him search the clear blue sky. Then he

Scarlet had no thoughts in his mind as the electron gun fired four times.

saw the giant bomber, flaps down, dropping from the air like a great bird descending.

The smoke billowed briefly as the huge tyres skidded on touch-down impact and Scarlet mentally judged the distance the aircraft would have to run before it came to a stop.

If they don't open that door I'll have to shoot my way in, he thought as he started to run, cutting across the angle from his position to the taxi-ing termination point.

The great machine slowed and then stopped. Scarlet was there, at the exact spot, waiting. The door began to open and the gun in Scarlet's hand came up, trained steadily on the ever widening doorway. Any minute he would see one of the crew—but he was wrong. The aircraft just sat there cn the runway, the entrance hatch wide open and empty.

Why were they inviting him in? What harm could they do him? They had no electron weapons. Scarlet shrugged off the puzzlement in his mind and slowly moved forwards. Then suddenly he was running, leaping and landing solidly inside the cabin.

He looked about him. The cabin area was empty.

"They must all be in the flight deck," he muttered to himself as he moved along the cat-walk to the front of the plane.

Next second there came a hiss as the automatic door closed tight. Scarlet had scarcely registered the fact before the plane lurched forward on full throttle.

Booster rockets exploded on the wing tips and the huge aircraft shot into the sky, climbing like an eagle, soaring to the heavens.

There was no hesitation now. For some reason, Scarlet had been allowed to board the aircraft. It had been a trap. Now he was sure the plane was on its way to New York to carry out the Mysteron threat. He burst into the cabin and saw the blank, staring expressions of the four crewmen as they huddled in one corner.

The aircraft was flying on automatic flight plan and the crew were of no further use—except to attack him.

At first, many months ago, Scarlet had felt sorry about destroying people of his own Earth who had fallen into the hands of the Mysterons. But time had taught him that the unfortunate agents of the powerful race from Mars were not human beings—they were zombies, the living dead, sent to bring havoc and destruction to Earth and its inhabitants.

Scarlet had no thoughts in his mind as the electron gun fired four times. He hardly noticed the men as they fell to the cabin floor, dead for all time, no longer possessed by the avengers of Mars.

"Spectrum control to BA 127—do you read me?"

The radio was crackling with static but Scarlet heard Colonel White's voice clearly, his heart lifting as he realized that he could contact his chief.

"Scarlet to Cloudbase—I read you strength seven, Colonel. The crew are dead. I'm going to try to gain control of the aircraft."

"Roger, Scarlet," came the quick reply. "Report when you've checked out the systems."

Scarlet glanced at the computer which gave him the flight plan of the aircraft. His worst fears were realized as he read the read-out slip.

"Course New York City. Bombs primed. No deviation. Self destruct on impact."

A chill ran through Scarlet's body. The fatal switch had been thrown. The aircraft had been set for a suicide mission and the only thing that could alter the controls was instructions from the captain of the crew. The computer had been programmed to accept the tone of Jeff Carson's voice only, and Carson lay dead on the floor.

"Colonel," said Scarlet slowly after he had made his report. "There's no choice. You have to use the electron missiles."

There was a long pause and Scarlet knew that White was weighing up the consequences of such an action.

"Can you eject, Captain?" came the reply at last.

"Negative," muttered Scarlet glancing at the shattered abort levers. "The crew sabotaged the mechanism of the ejector seats—and the hatchway is sealed by the air pressure."

"But, Scarlet," came the Colonel's anxious voice, "if we hit the plane with

the electron missiles—you'll be destroyed, too."

"I know. But what else can we do—sit here and watch twelve million people die when this plane crashes on New York?"

"I believe this was a carefully laid plot, Captain," said Colonel White softly, "to destroy *you*. The Mysterons figured you would take the chance to get aboard when that plane touched down at Prestwold. They knew about the electron missiles and that we would be forced to use them."

"Yes, sir. I worked all that out for myself two minutes ago. But if you don't hurry, their plan will misfire—and instead of killing one man they'll destroy millions."

There were no more words—to say; Scarlet was not being a hero—he was doing his duty. Colonel White shook his head as he pressed the launch authority for the new electron missiles. He little realized that he would be using them so soon after their installation—and using them against his finest and most vital fighting force. Then, he rose and walked across to where Lieutenant Green sat, grim and silent, as the communications monitoring console related the technicians' chatter.

"Range two thousand miles computed. Height at impact—nine thousand four hundred feet. Launch ignition immediate. Launch effected. Missiles homed—on target . . ."

In a daze, Colonel White listened to the cold words as they echoed metallically. Then he exchanged a brief glance with Lieutenant Green. But neither man said a word. There was nothing *to* say. It was the end of an era—in twenty minutes, Captain Scarlet would be dead!

"No bones broken, sir," smiled Doctor Fawn as he glanced up at Colonel White in the sick bay on Cloudbase. "He swallowed a lot of water, but he'll recover."

"Yes, it's time they did something to clean up the River Hudson," said the man who lay under the many electronic and humming instruments that Doctor Fawn had been using. "And can you get all this junk off me, Doctor? It's like being in a strait jacket."

The machines were cleared aside and Captain Scarlet sat up with a broad grin on his face.

"You didn't really think you'd get rid of me that easily did you, sir?"

Colonel White smiled back at Paul Metcalf.

"One of these days you will leave it too late, Captain," he said helping Scarlet into his dressing gown.

"Yes, you missed me by inches." Scarlet pointed to his head. "You even singed my hair when that missile hit the plane. Was there much damage? I couldn't see from the bottom of the river?"

"No—the Empire State lost a few windows from the overhead blast. But it was too high to cause any serious problems. What beats me is why we didn't think of the height before."

"Don't let it worry you, Colonel," smiled back the captain. "When twelve million people are about to die thoughts like being able to safely open an aircraft door below ten thousand feet and just jump out *don't* occur to you."

Colonel White laughed out loud. It could have gone so wrong. The door could have jammed, the altimeter could have been faulty. A million things could have upset Captain Scarlet's calculations.

Then a sobering thought struck the colonel. Nine thousand feet was three thousand yards—and three thousand yards was nearly two miles.

Scarlet had dropped like a stone into a river and had survived, and yet the man could still joke about it. But then, Colonel White never ceased to be amazed by Captain Scarlet.

Neither Colonel White nor Lieutenant Green, seated nearby, spoke a word. Soon Captain Scarlet would be dead!

GERRY ANDERSON'S

THUNDERBIRDS

FREIGHT-LOAD OF FEAR!

THE 'ATOMIC EXPRESS' HURTLED ALONG AT 150 M.P.H.- ITS DESTINATION, FORT COX ARSENAL. CREWLESS AND FULLY AUTOMATED, THE EXPRESS CARRIED ATOMIC MISSILES, WEAPONS AND AN ADVANCED NUCLEAR DEVICE. FOLLOWING A NEGATIVE WAR ALERT, THE FREIGHT WAS BEING RETURNED TO BE STOCK-PILED IN THE WORLD'S MOST ISOLATED AND IMPREGNABLE ARSENAL...

ONLY SIX MEN MANNED THE AUTOMATED, COMPUTERISED ARSENAL, CENTRED IN WILD, DESOLATE COUNTRY...

THE EXPRESS IS DEAD ON TIME, BOYS. WE'LL HAVE IT UNLOADED IN AN HOUR!

BUT THESE SIX MEN WERE **NOT** THE NORMAL SCREENED STAFF...

IT'LL BE TRICKY STUFF TO HANDLE, FABROSO!

I KNOW THAT, BUT WE HAVE ALL THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT *HERE!* THE NORMAL STAFF ARE DOING IT ALL THE TIME!

THE DELICATE NUCLEAR DEVICE IS WHAT WE WANT MOST. THE AZZARJAN GOVERNMENT WILL PAY US A COOL FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS! WORTH ALL THE RISKS, EH?

MEANWHILE, IN A SEALED ROOM, THE TRAINED STAFF OF FORT COX WERE RECOVERING FROM A KNOCK-OUT GAS...

WE'RE LOCKED IN- *TRAPPED!* IT'S A COMPLETE TAKEOVER!

WHAT HIT US?

EVERY HOUR, MILITARY SECURITY HEADQUARTERS MADE A ROUTINE CHECK. BUT THE TAKEOVER SQUAD WERE EVEN READY FOR THIS...

COME IN, FORT COX - GIVE SITUATION REPORT!

COX ARSENAL REPORTING - SITUATION NORMAL!

BUT, UNBEKNOWINGLY, THEIR CAREFULLY PLANNED OPERATION WAS THREATENED BY A NATURAL HAZARD — A VIOLENT ELECTRICAL STORM IN THE MOUNTAINS...

AN AVALANCHE OF ROCKS SMASHED DOWN ON TO THE RAILWAY BRIDGE...

THE STORM RAGED ON, AND THE ROCKFALL LEFT ONLY A BUCKLED RAIL ON THE ULTRA-STRONG TRACK — BUT IT SPELT DISASTER FOR THE ATOMIC EXPRESS...

IN AN INSTANT OF TIME...

CRASH!

THE CRASH TRIGGERED OFF ATOMIC ARTILLERY MISSILES IN THE FOURTH COACH...

MEANWHILE, AT THE ARSENAL...

SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG. THE TRAIN'S STOPPED AT RED ROCK GORGE! WE'D BETTER FLY OVER AND CHECK!

WE CAN'T AFFORD DELAY! THAT STUFF'S GOT TO BE LIFTED IF THERE'S BEEN A BREAKDOWN!

HOW, CHIEF? BRING THE STUFF TO THE PLANE OR FLY THE PLANE THERE?

BUT THE EXTENT OF THE DISASTER MADE EITHER PLAN IMPOSSIBLE...

BY THUNDER, THE ATOMIC STUFF'S GONE UP! *WE'LL NEVER GET NEAR IT!*

KEEP AWAY FROM THE CLOUD – BUT LET'S GET A LOOK DOWN THERE!

OUR PLAN'S WRECKED. BUT THE THIRD COACH CONTAINING THE NUCLEAR DEVICE IS STILL INTACT!

BUT IT MIGHT GO OFF AT ANY MINUTE – AND WE'D BE ATOMISED LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE WITHIN A HUNDRED-MILE RANGE!

FABROSO ALREADY HAD AN AUDACIOUS PLAN...

WE CAN'T CHECK IT. THERE'S ONLY ONE CREW THAT CAN DO THAT — *INTERNATIONAL RESCUE!* SEND A DISASTER REPORT – ***URGENT!***

THEY'LL DO THE SAFETY CHECK, AND LIFT THE DEVICE FOR US. AFTER THAT – ***WE'LL TAKE OVER!***

ALREADY, JOHN TRACY, IN THUNDERBIRD FIVE, WHICH ORBITED HIGH ABOVE THE EARTH, PICKED UP THE FIRST SIGNALS...

... EVIDENCE OF MINOR ATOMIC EXPLOSION – VICINITY FORT COX, FATHER. NO TEST SCHEDULED COULD BE ACCIDENTAL. SUGGEST DISASTER ROUTINE!

FROM THE ISLAND BASE IN THE PACIFIC, JEFF TRACY ACTED QUICKLY ON JOHN'S INFORMATION...

OKAY, JOHN, WE'VE GOT IT. MILITARY EXPRESS WRECKED WITH NUCLEAR DEVICE ABOARD WHICH HASN'T YET REACTED! **THUNDERBIRDS ARE GO!**

I'VE INSTRUCTED GORDON HOW TO CHECK, AND... MMM... RENDER IT HARMLESS IF NECESSARY. VIRGIL HAS LIFTING GEAR. I'LL WATCH FROM HERE AS JOHN BEAMS CLOSE-UP... ER... SATELLITE PICTURES TO ME!

GET THAT, JOHN?

F.A.B., FATHER!

AS SCOTT TOOK OFF IN THUNDERBIRD ONE, VIRGIL AND GORDON WERE CARRIED TO THUNDERBIRD TWO'S VAST HANGAR ...

MAKE A CHECK ON DAMAGE AND RADIATION THREAT, SCOTT, AND REPORT TO BRAINS!

RIGHT, DAD! THIS CALLS FOR QUICK ACTION!

EQUIPPED WITH ANTI-RADIATION SCREENS, THUNDERBIRD ONE LANCED UP INTO THE DANGER CLOUD...

I'M GOING TO TRY HEAT SUCTION TO LIFT AND BREAK UP THIS CLOUD, BRAINS!

ACTION APPROVED! I HAVE REPORTS OF A HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY-MILE AN HOUR WIND IN THE STRATOSPHERE. THAT SHOULD DISPERSE IT!

FROM WITHIN THE SPEEDING THUNDERBIRD ONE, SCOTT MADE HIS FIRST REPORT FROM THE DISASTER AREA...

IT'S SOME WRECK, ALL RIGHT. BUT THUNDERBIRD TWO COULD LAND. THERE'S A PAIR OF MILITARY CHOPPERS HOVERING AROUND! YOU'D BETTER WARN 'EM OFF, DAD!

THE BOOM OF THUNDERBIRD ONE'S MOTORS HAD DIED AWAY INTO THE SKY WHEN THUNDERBIRD TWO SETTLED IN THE GORGE...

COACH THREE IS THE ONE YOU WANT, GORDON. WEAR YOUR ANTI-RADIATION GEAR. I'LL STAY HERE!

HADN'T YOU BETTER TAKE-OFF, VIRGIL?

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NO, I'M STAYING IN CASE WE NEED A QUICK GETAWAY- AND ALSO TO RELAY ANY INSTRUCTIONS FROM BRAINS!

OKAY, BUT IF THAT NUCLEAR DEVICE GOES UP- WE BOTH GO UP WITH IT!

CAUTIOUSLY, GORDON SET TO WORK...

IT MAY BE ALL RIGHT, VIRGIL! I'D HAVE THOUGHT THE REACTOR WOULD HAVE BLOWN WHEN IT CRASHED - OR WHEN THE SMALLER BANG WENT OFF!

CAN'T TELL, GORDON. DEPENDS ON THE TRIGGERING MECHANISM!

GORDON CRAWLED WARILY INTO THE COACH AND CONTINUED HIS NERVE-RACKING WORK...

THE DEVICE SURE IS A BIG ONE, VIRGIL. I'M UNDOING THE INSPECTION PANEL NOW!

TAKE IT EASY, GORDON. DESCRIBE THE MECHANISM FOR BRAINS AS YOU GET TO IT!

MEANWHILE, FABROSO AND HIS MEN WATCHED FROM THE CIRCLING HELICOPTERS...

I'D FEEL HAPPIER IF WE WERE A LOT FARTHER OFF, CHIEF!

NOTHING'S HAPPENED YET! AND WE *MUST* KEEP AN EYE ON THEM!

AT THAT MOMENT, SCOTT TRACY WAS HURTLING DOWN FROM THE STRATOSPHERE IN THUNDERBIRD ONE...

MILITARY SECURITY REPORTS NO REPLY TO HOURLY CONTACT WITH FORT COX, SCOTT. SEEMS ODD. BETTER CHECK!

I'M ON MY WAY, DAD!

SECONDS LATER...

I DON'T QUITE GET THE IDEA OF THAT PLANE. *SOMEBODY* MUST BE HERE!

BUT, ENTERING BY THE FREIGHT BAY, SCOTT FOUND THE CONTROL ROOM...

DARN IT, THEY HAVE ALL VANISHED. THOSE CHOPPERS I SAW – BUT SURELY THEY'D HAVE LEFT *SOMEBODY* IN CHARGE HERE?

SEARCHING THE BUILDING, SCOTT HEARD FAINT SOUNDS FROM BEHIND A HEAVY DOOR. THEN...

SOMETHING HAPPENED TO US – GAS! THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A RAID!

SO **YOU** DIDN'T REPORT THE TRAIN WRECK?

TRAIN WRECK? *WHAT* TRAIN WRECK?

BY THUNDER, IT MUST HAVE BEEN THOSE OTHER CHARACTERS! VIRGIL AND GORDON ARE IN DANGER – AND NOT ONLY FROM *AN EXPLOSION!*

WHILE SCOTT RACED BACK TO THUNDERBIRD ONE, GORDON HAD JUST FINISHED NEUTRALISING THE DEADLY NUCLEAR DEVICE...

OKAY, VIRGIL – JOB'S DONE!

LET'S GO! IT'S SAFE FOR US TO MOVE IN AND TAKE OVER! PUT ON THE ANTI-RADIATION SUITS WE BROUGHT!

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE! STAY CLEAR OF THE CRAFT!

HEY! WHAT'S THE GAME?

MY STARS! THEY MUST WANT US – AND THE THUNDERBIRD!

FABROSO'S MEN SWARMED OUT, GUNS READY. BUT ONLY GORDON HEARD VIRGIL'S BARKED ORDER AS HE REACHED FOR A SWITCH...

RUN - AND THROW YOURSELF FLAT, GORDON. THEY WON'T HAVE A CHANCE TO SHOOT! I'M GOING TO USE THE FORCE FIELD!

IR

AN INVISIBLE BARRIER SEEMED TO HIT THE RAIDERS WITH SHATTERING FORCE...

UUGH!

THAT'LL KEEP 'EM STUNNED FOR QUITE SOME TIME!

C

VIRGIL AND GORDON WERE ALREADY AT WORK ON THE NEXT PART OF THE SALVAGE OPERATION WHEN SCOTT ARRIVED...

THUNDERBIRD 2

TBI

I THOUGHT YOU FELLOWS WOULD NEED RESCUING, BUT I SEE YOU DIDN'T NEED MY HELP!

THANKS, SCOTT! WE MANAGED! WE'RE TAKING THE DEVICE AND THE PRISONERS TO FORT COX!

3

ON FARAWAY TRACY ISLAND...

MMM...EXCELLENT JOB! YOU'VE ALERTED THE MILITARY, MISTER TRACY?

ALL IN HAND, BRAINS. THE CORDON IS MOVING IN!

AS THE TWO THUNDERBIRDS ROARED UP OUT OF THE GORGE AND HEADED FOR FORT COX...

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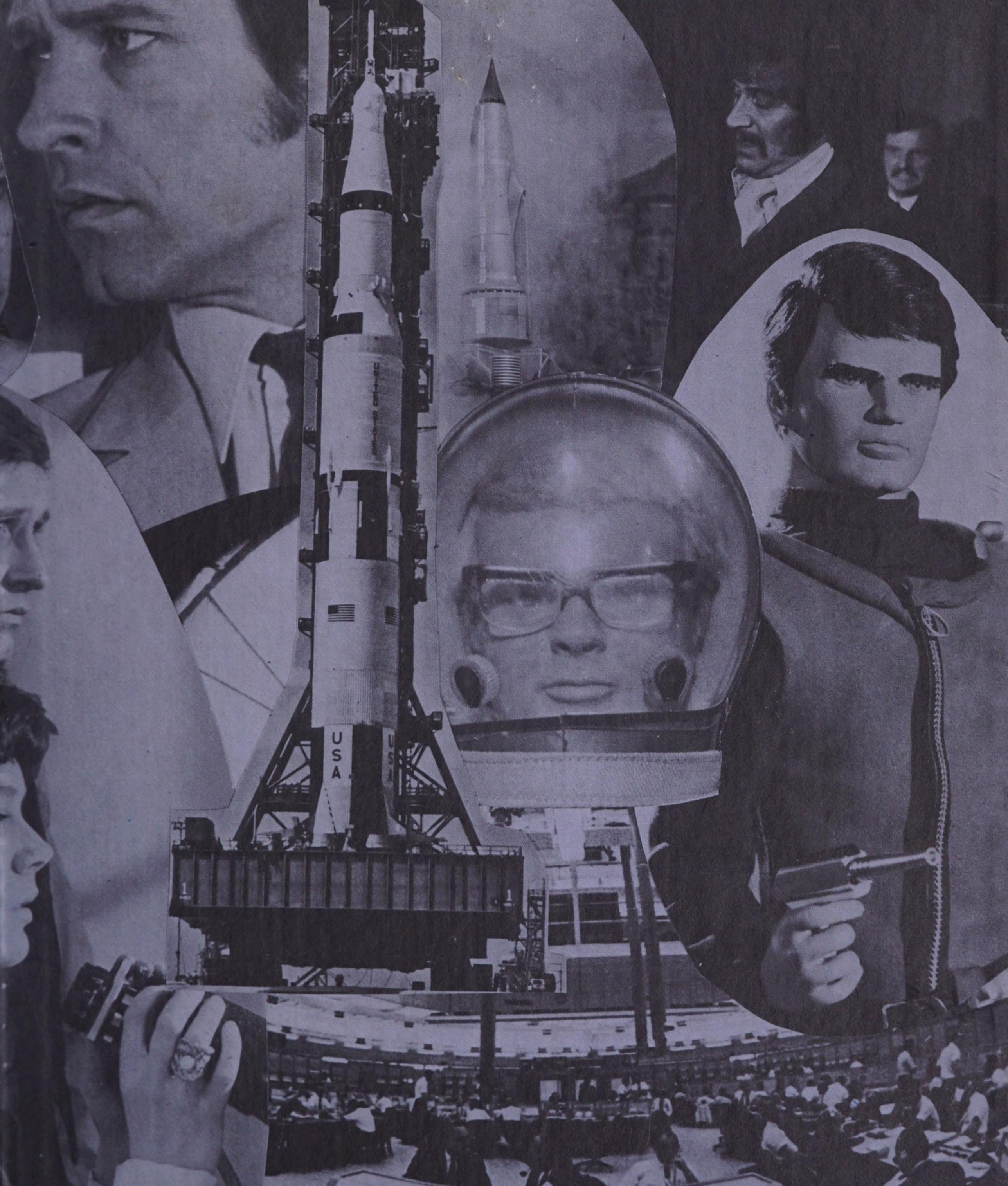
REPORT THE AREA SAFE FOR PROTECTED VEHICLES. WE MOVE IN TO SALVAGE THE WEAPONS AND PICK UP THE PRISONERS FROM FORT COX. QUITE A JOB BY THOSE INTERNATIONAL RESCUE BOYS!



THUNDERBIRDS

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